

Historical Notes on Lincoln's Inn Fields.

BY

A. H. MARKS, B.A.

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LINCOLN'S INN GATEWAY.

Historical Notes on Lincoln's Inn Fields.

BY

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PREFACE.

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, one of London's most interesting sites, has been described as the topographical centre of London. Its historical and political associations are so intermingled with the Legal profession, as to warrant another description given it as being the Legal Centre of England.

The object of the present little volume is to give in concise form Notes upon the leading historical and other incidents associated with the most interesting and largest ancient Square in London. The illustrations have been prepared from photographs taken specially for this book, and the principal authorities consulted were: LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL—Survey of London, Vol. III.; HECKETHORN—Lincoln's Inn Fields and the Localities Adjacent; LOFTIE—The Inns of Court and Chancery, and LEIGH HUNT—The Town.

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CHAPTER I.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

THE open space now known as Lincoln's Inn Fields, being about seven acres in extent, has the distinction of being the largest Square in London. Its size has enabled the London County Council, in whom the ownership of the land is vested, to make of it a much more pleasing spot than are most of the London Squares. Whereas too many of these latter are depressing areas of ill-kept grass, studded with trees apparently for lack of anything better to put there, and enclosed by unbroken rows of gloomy houses, Lincoln's Inn Fields is much more like a miniature park, with walks, flower-beds, lawns, and (recently) tennis courts. The Fields are wide enough to prevent the houses which enclose it from obtruding themselves on the notice of residents in those on the opposite side of the Square; and in summer, when the trees are in full leaf, scarcely a house is visible

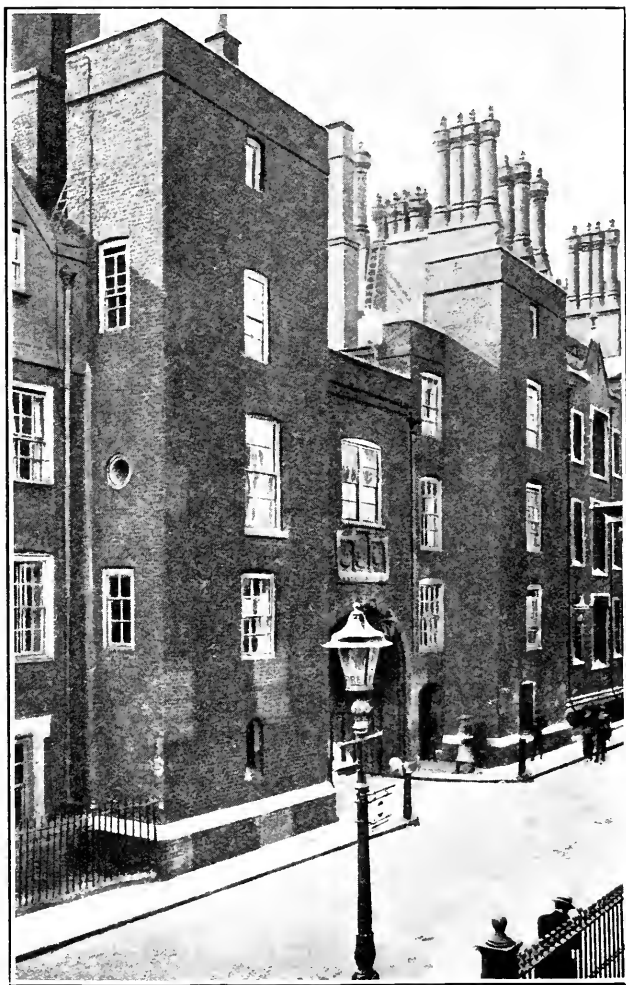
from the centre of the Fields. Moreover, the character of the buildings surrounding the Square is in pleasant contrast with the hideous boarding-houses of Bloomsbury and other Squares in the neighbourhood. The whole of the eastern side is occupied by Lincoln's Inn, where some of the architectural glories of London are displayed, while on the remaining sides the buildings, whether modern offices or eighteenth-century town houses, are devoid of the drabness which comes from exact similarity of design. In any city of the kingdom, Lincoln's Inn Fields, especially in the summer time, would strike the eye as being of pleasing appearance: they are, therefore, the more worthy of note as being situated in the very heart of London.

Before dealing with the history of the Fields, a few words must be devoted to the Inn from which they take their name. The Holborn district was the first to be built upon when London began to spread westwards beyond the Fleet river, the region of the modern Fleet Street being too swampy to permit of settlement until both the Thames and its tributary had been embanked and the land drained. Thus, the Knights Templar established themselves in Holborn in 1118,

over 60 years before they built their church and finally fixed their abode in the "Temple." At an equally early period the Bishops of Ely and Chichester owned property in and around Chancery Lane, and the passage still called "Chichester Rents" serves as a memorial of one of them, who had his town residence approximately on the site of the New Square of Lincoln's Inn. Chancery Lane was originally called "New Lane," but later, "Chancellor's Lane," the change probably taking place in the reign of Henry III., when Ralph Neville, Bishop of Chichester, held the office of Lord Chancellor from 1218 to 1238. "Chancery Lane" is probably a corrupted form of "Chancellor's Lane."

THE BLACK FRIARS.

In the year 1221 the Order of the Dominicans—commonly called the Black Friars—came to England and settled "without the walls of the City, by Oldbourne." The site of their original building is supposed to have been at the junction of Chancery Lane and Holborn, on the western side of the former. Here the friars prospered, and greatly increased in wealth and numbers, so that settlements were made in other parts.



LINCOLN'S INN GATEWAY, CHANCERY LANE.

of the country. Thirteen friars came to England originally, but by the year 1243 there were 80 in the Holborn establishment alone. The Order gradually obtained possession of all the land between Holborn on the north and the Bishop of Chichester's mansion on the south, thus including nearly all the present area of Lincoln's Inn.

In the year 1279 the Dominicans, like the Templars before them, migrated to the banks of the Thames, and the Blackfriars district commemorates their new dwelling. Their old possessions were bought in 1286 by Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, for 550 marks. Lincoln then erected a town house or "inn" on his new property, the word "inn" being used in the same sense as the French "*hôtel*," to signify a private mansion. The garden and orchard of the inn were famous for their fruit, by selling which the Earl seems to have derived a substantial income. It is said that Lincoln was a patron of the legal profession, and installed law students in the inn even during his own lifetime. It is certain that, after his death in 1312, the inn became the property of "the professors of the law," either by the Earl's will or by purchase. The lawyers also leased from the

Bishop of Chichester his house and garden, with the "coneygarth" or rabbit-warren annexed thereto. The freehold of this latter property was bought in the year 1580, and the whole area of the modern Lincoln's Inn thus passed into the hands of the lawyers, and has ever since remained one of the nurseries of the legal profession. The Old Hall was erected in 1506, the gateway to Chancery Lane in 1518, and the chapel in 1623. Though belonging more properly to a history of the Inn than to one of the Fields, the familiar story of Ben Johnson cannot be omitted. Aubrey, in his *Lives and Letters*, relates that "Johnson's mother, after his father's death, married a bricklayer; and 'tis generally said that he wrought for some time with his father-in-law, and particularly on the garden wall of Lincoln's Inn, next to Chancery Lane. . . . A knight, or benchman, walking through and hearing him repeat some Greek names out of Homer, discoursing with him, and finding him to have a wit extraordinary, gave him some exhibition to maintain him at Trinity College in Cambridge."

Fuller, in his *Worthies of England*, also notes that "He (Johnson) helped in the building of the new structure of Lincoln's

Inn, where, having a trowel in his hand, he had a book in his pocket." The garden wall above referred to stood on the spot now occupied by the Stone Buildings, which were erected at the end of the eighteenth century.

THE FIELDS.

Leaving now the history of Lincoln's Inn, and turning to that of the Fields themselves, it must be noted that when the highway from London to Westminster was first made there existed between it and the much earlier highway from the City to the West—the modern Holborn—three pieces of waste land or common field, bounded on the east by Chancery Lane, and called from very early times Fickett's Field, Cup Field, and Purse Field. Fickett's Field was acquired by the Knights Templar when they moved from Holborn to the Strand, and since it is now almost completely occupied by the Royal Courts of Justice and by the New Square of Lincoln's Inn, it scarcely comes within the boundary of the modern Fields. The Cup Field comprises the eastern portion of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and included at one time part of the garden of the Inn itself. The Purse Field included, besides the western

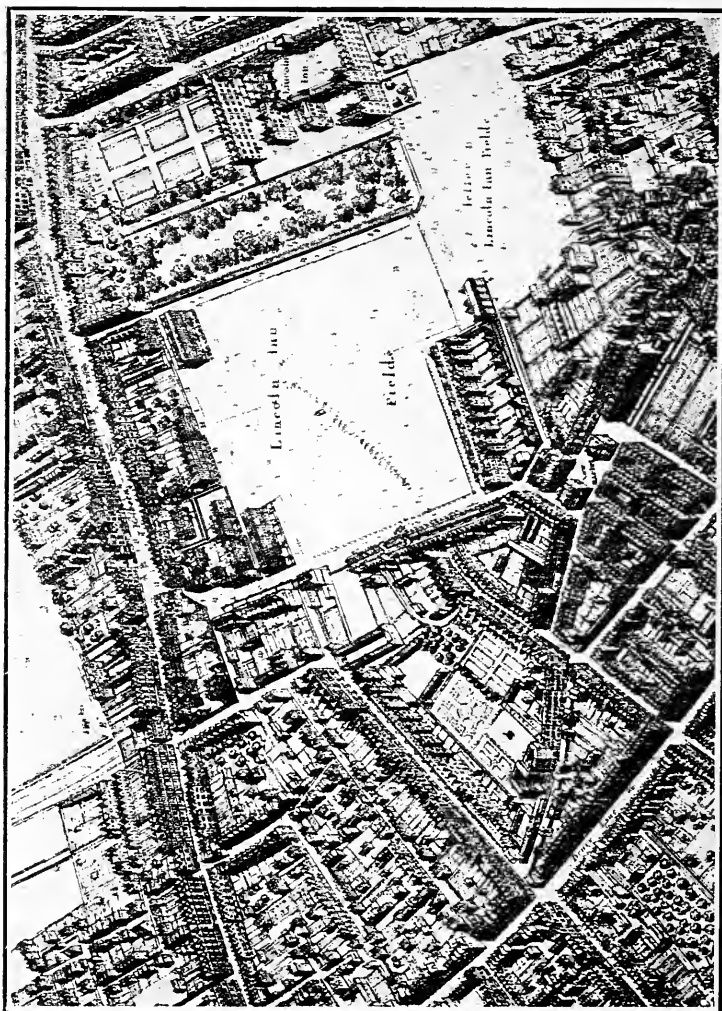
portion of Lincoln's Inn Fields, some of the land on the west side of the modern Kingsway.

The first definite information about the Cup Field dates from the year 1431. By that time the field, or some of it, had apparently ceased to be waste land, for 24 dwelling houses and 10 acres of arable land, situate partly in the Cup Field and partly on land now forming Lincoln's Inn gardens, came in that year into the possession of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, which was established in Clerkenwell. Of the early history of the Purse Field nothing is known ; it can only be said that at the beginning of the sixteenth century it belonged to the Hospital of St. Giles in the Fields. During the same century, both Cup Field and Purse Field were leased out by their ecclesiastical owners, and, curiously enough, both were let to inns, of the modern and not the ancient variety. In 1529 the Cup Field was leased to the proprietor of the Ship Inn in the Strand, while in 1524 the White Hart Inn, at the corner of Drury Lane and High Holborn, with a cottage " and a pasture of land lying in the parish of the aforesaid St. Giles, called Pursefield," had been leased to one Katherine Smyth, *alias* Clerke. This White Hart Inn

with the Pursefield was acquired by Henry VIII. in 1537, while at the Reformation the Cup Field, as belonging to an ecclesiastical corporation, was confiscated, and both properties thus became vested in the Crown.

RESTRICTION ON BUILDING.

From the reign of Elizabeth onwards, the rapid expansion of London came to be regarded as a danger to the realm, and many Acts of Parliament were passed prohibiting the building of houses on the outskirts of the city. Whether considerations of public health prompted this policy, or whether the Government of the day feared the possible results to the peace of the realm of the concentration of so large a number of people in so small an area, it is difficult to say. The balance of probability inclines towards the latter motive. On several occasions in history, before standing armies became established, the impotence of the executive in the midst of an angry population, and the actual danger in which the Court might be involved, have been demonstrated. From the assembling of the Long Parliament in November, 1640, until the outbreak of the Civil War, in August, 1642, the courtiers of



Charles I. were again and again insulted on the very threshold of Whitehall by the excited mob of London. In May, 1641, when Charles' greatest Minister, the Earl of Strafford, was condemned by Parliament, the palace had to be barricaded against the mob ; and the King's consent to his servant's execution, given in violation of his personal pledge, was wrung from him by the knowledge that if it were refused, his Queen and her young children would be sacrificed. In January, 1642, again, after his attempted arrest of the Five Members, who fled to the City for refuge, Charles felt safer away from London, though seven months were to elapse before war actually broke out. In view of these and similar facts, no further search need be made for the underlying principle of these early building restrictions.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, with their central position between the two great highways of the Strand and Holborn, and within easy reach of Westminster, the seat of government and of the administration of justice, on the one hand, and of the city, the home of wealth and commerce, on the other, obviously formed a good building site ; but strenuous efforts were made to preserve them as an open space.

The Purse Field was leased out by the Crown in 1598 for a term of 60 years, and in 1613 the then lessee, Sir Charles Cornwallis, applied for a licence to build a house there, such licence being necessary in view of the Acts above referred to. The application was, however, refused on account of an appeal addressed to the Privy Council by the Society of Lincoln's Inn.

In 1617 a petition was addressed to James I. by the members of the Inns of Court and Chancery, and by inhabitants of the parishes adjoining Lincoln's Inn Fields, praying that "the fieldes commonly called Lincolnes Inn Fieldes being parcel of His Majesties inheritance might for their general commoditie and health be converted into walkes." The Privy Council approved of subscriptions being raised for the purpose, and in the following year appointed a Commission to survey the Fields and report on the measures necessary for converting them into a public park. Among the Commissioners was Inigo Jones, the Surveyor-General. Nothing, however, came of the Commission, and not only were no walks laid out, but many buildings were soon erected

in the Fields, thus frustrating the main object of the Commission.

CROWN BUILDING LICENCE.

Both Purse and Cup Fields were, in the year 1638, vested in one William Newton, as lessee under the Crown. Taking advantage of Charles I.'s financial difficulties, caused by his quarrel with the Parliament, Newton pointed out to the King that if building were to be permitted on the Fields, the annual rent received by the Crown in respect of the property could be much increased. This was too tempting a bait to be refused, and in spite of a further petition by the Society of Lincoln's Inn, Newton was granted a licence to build 32 houses on the Purse Field. No time was lost, and within three years all the west and half the south side of the modern Fields had been built upon. Of the houses thus erected two—Nos. 59 and 60—still exist, though now converted into one. In 1639 Newton concluded an agreement with the Society of Lincoln's Inn, whereby the central area of the Fields, from Newton's new buildings on the west to the wall of Lincoln's Inn on the east, were to remain for ever

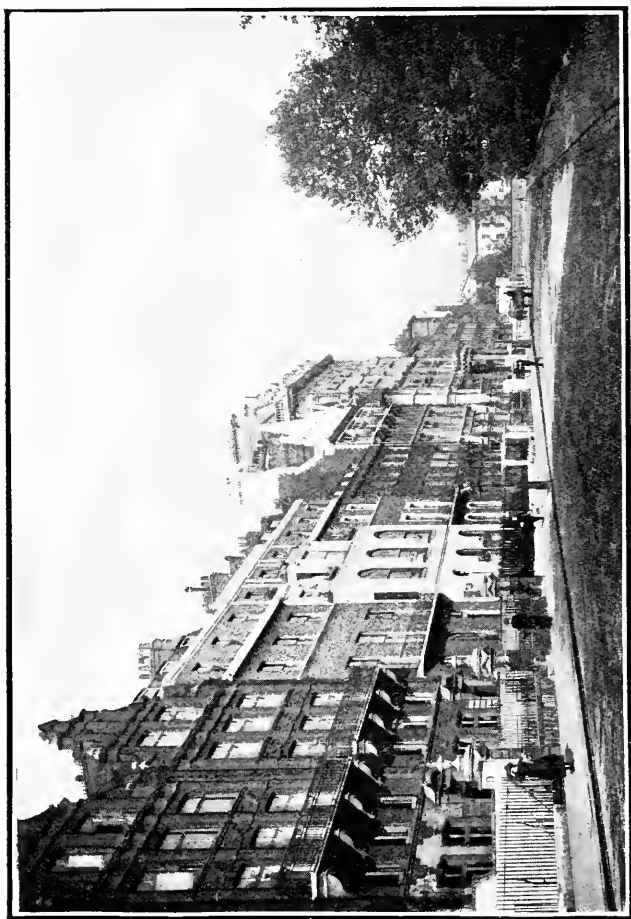
open. About the same time Newton became freeholder of the Purse Field.

The Society of Lincoln's Inn evidently feared that Newton, having been successful in building round the western side of the Fields, would also attempt to build on the Cup Field. As in 1638 they had failed to obtain satisfaction from the King, they now applied to the Parliament, and in August, 1641, the House of Commons ordered that a stay be made "of any further building in Lincolnes-inn-fields (especially by Mr. Newton) till this House shall take further order therein." In June, 1642, some timber which had been stored in the Fields for building purposes was set on fire.

No further buildings seem to have been erected during the Civil War, but the condition of the Fields was far from satisfactory, if a petition addressed to Parliament in 1645 is to be believed. Not only were Newton's lately-erected houses stated to be "inhabited for the most part by Popish recusants," but the Fields were used as a dumping ground for dung and dirt, and a horsepond had been made therein, whereby the petitioners were "almost quite deprived of their former liberty of walking, training, drying of clothes, and

recreating themselves in the said fields." During the Commonwealth houses began to be erected on the north side of the Fields.

The year 1657 is important as marking the first time that any portion of the Fields came actually into the possession of the Inn from which they take their name. By that year the freehold interest in the Cup Field, which, as has been said, formed the eastern and larger portion of the Fields, was vested jointly in three men—Sir William Cowper, Robert Henley, and James Cowper. These three gentlemen had presumably purchased from the Commonwealth some of the confiscated property of the Crown; and they were desirous of completing the girdle of houses round the Fields. Anticipating trouble with the Society of Lincoln's Inn, they came to an arrangement with it, whereby the rows of houses already existing along the north and south sides of the Fields were to be continued to a line 40 ft. distant from the wall of Lincoln's Inn. All the remainder of the Cup Field, that is, the eastern side and the central area, was sold to the Society for a nominal sum of five shillings, the Society forthwith leasing it to the vendors for 900 years, presumably on condition that it should

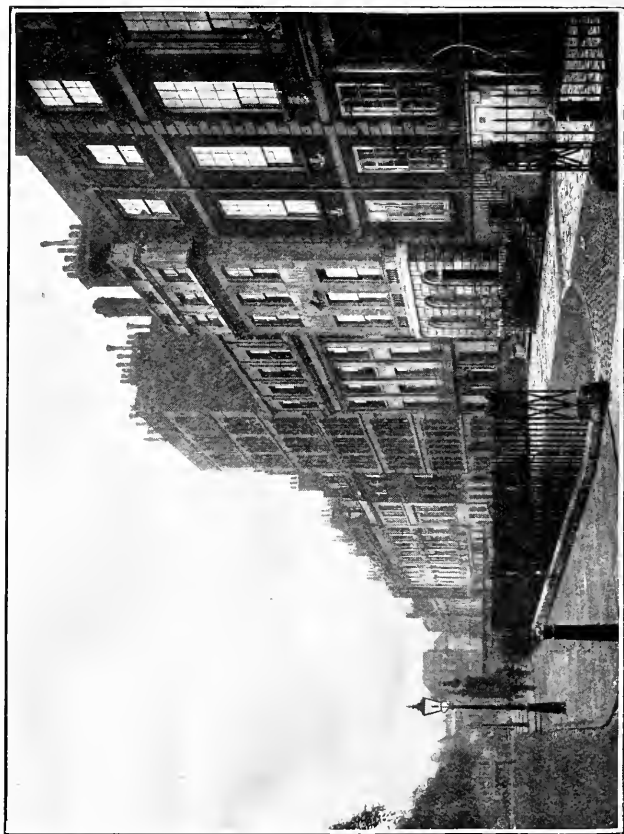


NORTH SIDE AND SOANE MUSEUM.

never be built upon. Parliament had already in the same year passed an Act imposing a fine of a year's rent on all houses which, since the year 1620, had been built within 10 miles of London or which should thereafter be built, unless each house should have not less than four acres of land attached to it. This Act specifically mentioned the houses to be erected by Henley and the two Cowpers under the agreement of 1657.

THE RESTORATION OF 1660.

Thus, by the Restoration of 1660, the Fields had in one respect assumed their present appearance, being enclosed by houses on three sides, and open to Lincoln's Inn on the fourth. Each row of houses had a distinct name. Thus, the northern side of the Fields was, and still is, called Newman's Row, after a lessee of the above-mentioned William Newton, who had built some of the houses at the western end of the row. At various periods in its history it has also been called Holborn Row and Turnstile Row, the latter name alluding to the two turnstiles which, one at each end of Newman's Row, gave access to the Fields from Holborn, and whose sites are still called Great and Little Turnstile. The

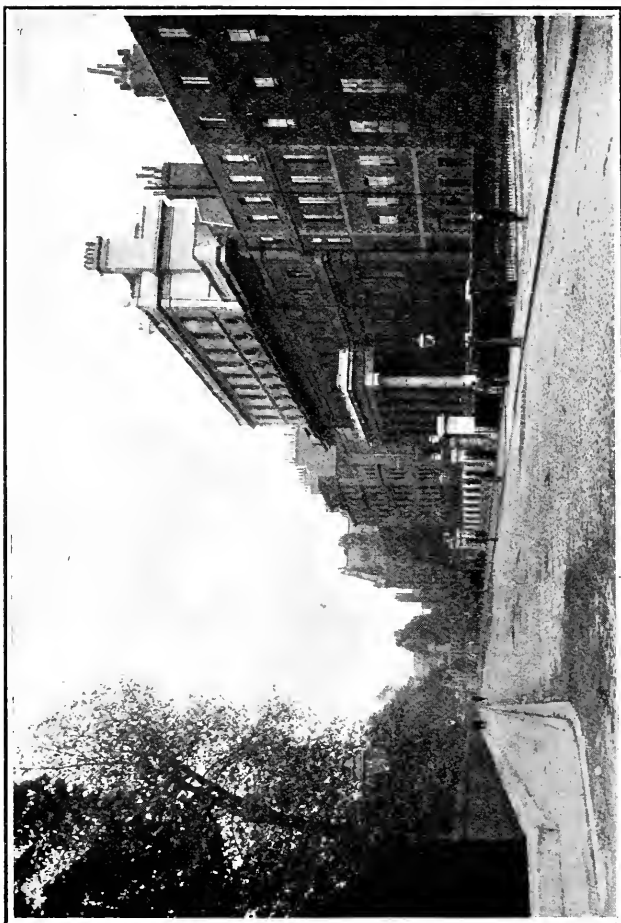


WEST SIDE, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

western side was named Arch Row, from the archway which, until recent years, existed between Nos. 54 and 55, under which ran the old Sardinia Street. This latter street was originally called Duke Street, but changed its name in the early part of the eighteenth century, when the Sardinian Embassy was situate at Nos. 53 and 54. The chapel attached to this Embassy continued to be a Roman Catholic Church when in 1799 the Sardinian Embassy was closed, but in 1909 it was pulled down and re-erected on its present site in the Kingsway.

The southern row of houses in Lincoln's Inn Fields was called Portugal Row, the Portuguese Ambassador having his residence there before, in the reign of William III., he removed to Nos. 53 and 54, where he soon gave place to his Sardinian *confrère*. Portugal Street still survives, parallel with the Row, at the back of the line of dwellings.

Apart from the houses by which they were surrounded, the Fields presented a very different aspect from that which, fortunately, they bear at the present day. Under the agreement of 1657, the Cup Field had been "levelled, plained, and cast into grass plots and gravelled walks of convenient breadth,



SOUTH SIDE AND ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

railed all along on each side, and set with rows of trees ” ; but the Purse Field, to which the agreement did not apply, remained a bare open space.

DISORDERLY FIELDS.

In 1735 it was stated in an Act of Parliament that “ the great square, now called Lincoln’s Inn Fields, hath for some years past lain waste and in great disorder, whereby the same has become a receptacle for rubbish, dirt, and nastiness of all sorts ; also for want of proper fences to enclose the same great mischiefs have happened to many of His Majesty’s subjects going about their lawful occasions, several of whom have been killed, and others maimed and hurt by horses which have been from time to time aired and rode in the said Fields, and by reason of the same Fields being kept open, many wicked and disorderly persons have frequented and met together therein, using unlawful sports and games and drawing in and enticing young persons into gaming, idleness, and other vicious courses, and vagabonds, common beggars and other disorderly persons resort therein, where many robberies, assaults, outrages and enormities have been and

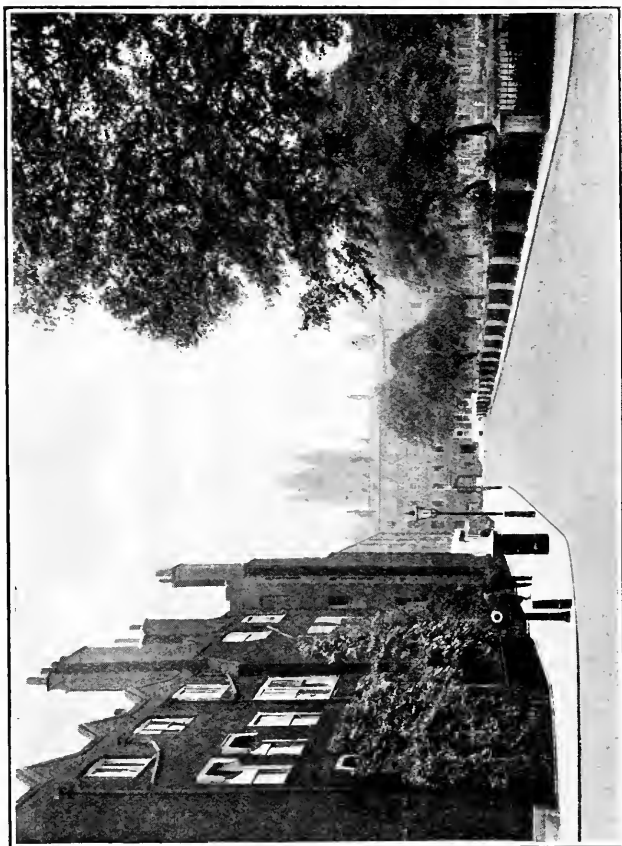
continually are committed." It was also reported that "the present Master of the Rolls was, last summer twelvemonth, rode over in the said Fields, and still continues lame by the hurt which he then received." In 1664 it had been stated that one Thomas Newton, son of the above-mentioned William Newton, had erected "several wooden houses or sheds and digged gravell pits in ye middle of ye said fieelde neere ye common waies and passages there, and employed ye said houses for puppet playes, dancing on ye ropes, mountebanks, and other like uses." The lessees of the Cup Field, who were responsible for fencing that portion of the Fields, complained that "by disorders committed within that part of Lincoln's Inn Fields called Purse Field, the rails, boundaries, and landmarks of the petitioners were daily torn up, stolen, and conveyed away." Gay, the author of "The Beggar's Opera" thus refers to the neighbourhood in one of his less-known works :

"Where Lincoln's Inn, wide space, is railed around,
Cross not with vent'rous step ; there oft is found
The lurking thief, who, while the daylight shone,
Made the walls echo with his begging tone ;
That crutch, which late compassion mov'd, shall wound
Thy bleeding head, and fell thee to the ground.

'Tho' thou art tempted by the linkman's call,
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall ;
In the mid way he'll quench the flaming brand,
And share the booty with the pilf'ring band..
Still keep the public streets, where oily rays,
Shot from the crystal lamp, o'erspread the ways."

THE MANSIONS IN THE FIELDS.

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Lincoln's Inn Fields was neither the peaceful nor the beautiful spot it has since become, but very much the reverse. This state of affairs, moreover, existed at the time when the houses surrounding the Fields were at the very height of their glory. Instead of, as now, being almost entirely composed of professional offices, the three sides of the square were occupied by some of the highest nobility and gentry of the realm, Ministers of the Crown, lawyers, judges, and ambassadors of foreign monarchs, outside the windows of whose town mansions was displayed this squalid and disgusting scene. There came a time, however, when even eighteenth-century susceptibilities were shocked, and the outrage already alluded to, of which the Master of the Rolls was the victim, seems to have been the last straw. The inhabitants of houses in the vicinity petitioned Parliament for

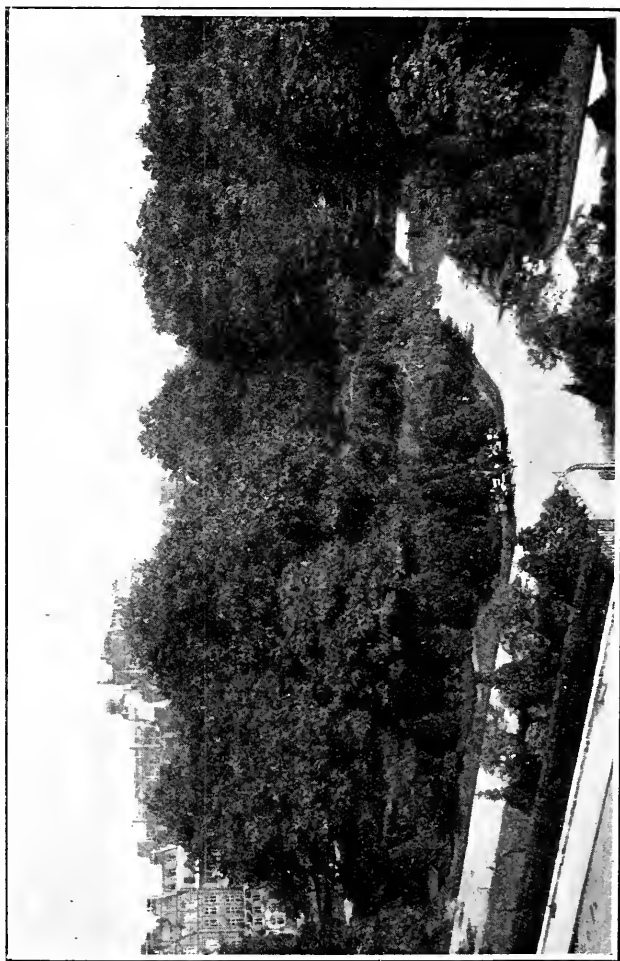


LINCOLN'S INN, NEW SQUARE.

powers to put an end to this state of things, and accordingly, in 1735, there was passed an Act "to enable the present and future proprietors and inhabitants of the houses in Lincoln's Inn Fields in the county of Middlesex to make a rate on themselves for raising money sufficient to enclose, clean, and adorn the said Fields." The trustees under this Act were empowered to take steps to punish encroachments on or nuisances in the Fields, and to lay out gardens and walks in accordance with their own wishes, compensation being paid to the holders of the 900 years' lease of 1657.

AN UNPOPULAR MEASURE.

That the Fields were not immediately made safe for peaceful citizens is proved by an event which happened in the very next year. Sir Joseph Jekyll, "having been active in bringing a Bill into Parliament to raise the price of gin, became very obnoxious to the poor, and when walking one day in the Fields (apparently in broad daylight), at the time of breaking-in the horses, the populace threw him down and trampled on him, from which treatment his life was in great danger." The Fields, how-



THE FIELDS VIEWED FROM NO. 59 AND 60.

ever, were laid out in grass plots with gravel walks, enclosed with an iron railing. In the centre was placed a large stone basin of water, which, however, was filled up in 1890.

The Fields were not yet out of danger of being completely built upon, and with the gradual decay of the neighbourhood from a residential into a professional one, the inhabitants—the most natural guardians of an open space—diminished in numbers and importance. Four times, at least—in 1699, 1812, 1819, and 1824—designs had been drawn for a church to be built in the middle of the Square; while in 1842 it was proposed that the Royal Courts of Justice should occupy the site. Fortunately, none of these plans were carried into effect. The garden as at present arranged was laid out early in the last century, but was not thrown open to the public till in 1894 the London County Council bought the residue of the 900 years' lease of the Fields from the trustees under the Act of 1735 at the price of £12,000, thus giving to the public the benefit of the largest square in London, situate in the very heart of the Metropolis.

Reference may here be made to the oft-repeated statement that the area of Lincoln's Inn Fields is exactly equal to that of the base of the Great Pyramid. This is, in fact, not the case. The area of the Fields, counting in the forecourts of the houses, is, as has been said above, about seven acres, a space of ground which falls short by about one and a half acres (70,000 square feet) of that covered by the Pyramid.

THE LEGAL CENTRE.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, while being popularly called and described by one writer as the actual centre of London, is, without question, the historical home and centre of the British Legal profession, apart from the fact that the Royal Courts of Justice, the Record Office, Bankruptcy Buildings and the Patent Office are all situate in close proximity to its open square, as shown by the plan reproduced from a modern town plan of Holborn and district.

CHAPTER II.

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS IN HISTORY.

THE first historical event of any importance immediately connected with Lincoln's Inn Fields was the execution there of the Babington conspirators in the year 1586. The Babington plot was the last of the many entered into by the English Roman Catholics, with the help and encouragement of Spain, to place Mary Queen of Scots, then held in captivity by Elizabeth, on the throne of England. Six of the conspirators were deputed to assassinate Elizabeth, while the remainder, which included several gentlemen of position, were to raise the country in arms in support of Mary. So well served, however, was Elizabeth by her spies, organised by Sir Francis Walsingham, one of the Secretaries of State, that the latter was fully aware of the plot, and several of the "conspirators" were in reality *agents provocateur* of the Government. The plot was allowed to mature in order to incriminate the Queen of Scots herself, and then the conspirators were

arrested, tried by special commission, and to the number of 14 hanged, drawn, and quartered in Lincoln's Inn Fields on September 20th and 21st, 1586. The execution is sometimes erroneously stated to have taken place at Tyburn, but contemporary evidence leaves no doubt that the Fields were the actual scene. It will be remembered that at this period the land was Crown property.

The chief importance of the conspiracy lies in the fact that it was the pretext for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. Anthony Babington, who gave his name to the plot, though he was not its leader, had been a page at Sheffield Castle, where Mary had spent the greater part of her imprisonment, and he had evidently fallen under the spell of the unfortunate Queen. Unluckily for her, Babington communicated all the details of the plot to her by letter; and Mary had replied, encouraging the conspirators, and showing herself to be fully cognisant of the proposed assassination of Elizabeth.

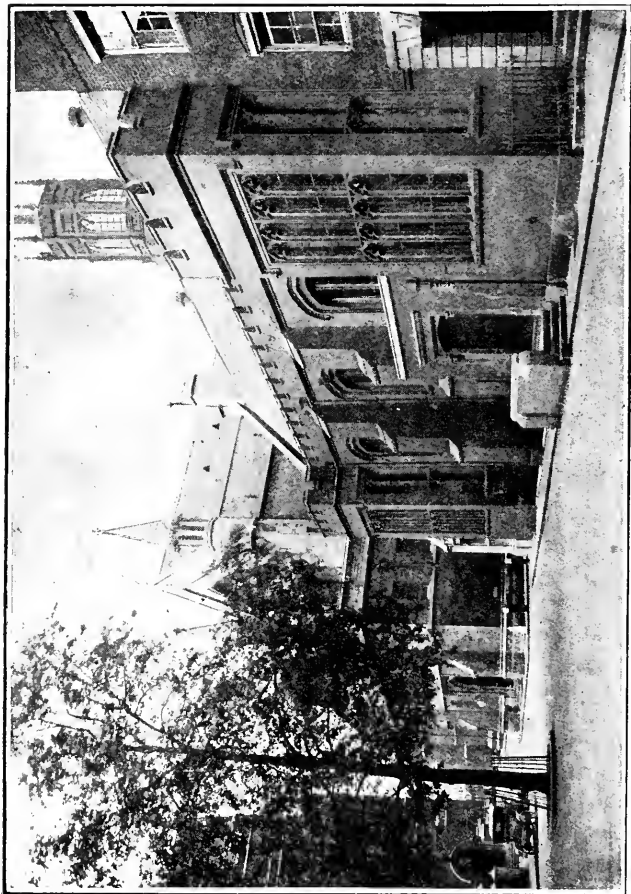
Both letters had passed through the hands of Walsingham's spies, and they formed the principal evidence against the Queen, who was executed at Fotheringhay on February 8th,

1587. It was this execution which brought about the final breach between Elizabeth and Philip II. of Spain, and which caused the latter to equip the Great Armada, which met destruction in the following year.

EXECUTION OF LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL.

The latter part of the seventeenth century was an eventful one for Lincoln's Inn Fields. In 1666 they were one of the places appointed for the deposit of the goods of the refugees from the City during the Great Fire, and to the London trained bands was allotted the duty of guarding the goods so assembled. In 1683 took place the most memorable incident in the history of the Fields, the execution of Lord William Russell, which must be dealt with somewhat in detail.

The Russell family was of those which rose into greatness at the time of the Reformation, being endowed with the estates of the dissolved monasteries. In 1542 the head of the family was created Earl of Bedford by King Henry VIII., and was granted the confiscated lands of the Abbey of Woburn. The "Bedford estate" is well known in London, and Bedford and Russell Squares still commemorate the family names.

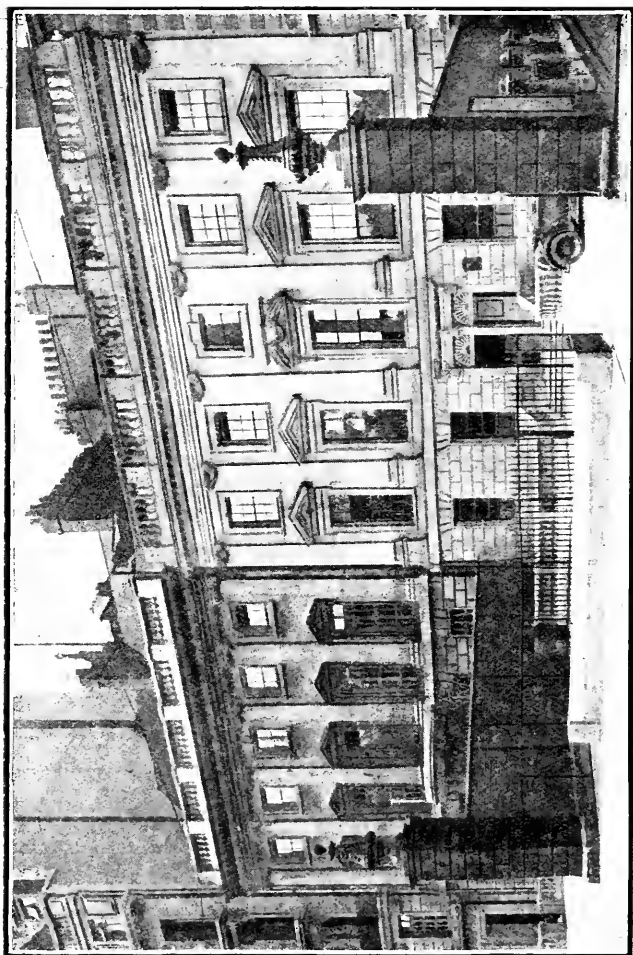


THE CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S INN.

Lord William Russell was the third son of the fifth Earl of Bedford (created Duke 1694), and took a prominent part in politics in the reign of Charles II. He was one of the leaders of the Whig or "Country" Party, and a supporter of the Exclusion Bills, designed to debar the Duke of York, the future James II., from the throne on account of his religion. The Bills failed to pass, and a Roman Catholic succession being thus assured, certain of the more extreme Whigs plotted to assassinate both Charles II. and the Duke of York at a place called the Rye House, in Hertfordshire, as they came back from the races at Newmarket. The plot failed, and all the Whig leaders, including Russell, who did not flee the country were at once arrested. It is practically certain that Russell was not implicated in the Rye House plot, so far as that aimed at the assassination of the King; but he had intrigued with the men who formed the plot with the object of overthrowing the Government, and his past record was bad. Charles II. was supported throughout the greater part of his reign by money supplied by the French King, Louis XIV.; but there were occasions on which he asserted his independence, and at these times French

money was found, not in his pockets, but in those of the Whig leaders. Algernon Sidney, who shared Russell's fate, had undoubtedly received French bribes ; Russell as certainly had not, but he had nevertheless been in consultation with the French Ambassador with regard to the means to be employed to thwart the King. All this was known to Charles II., and Russell, accordingly, though he may not have been technically guilty of high treason, was certainly a suspicious character. He was, however, brought to trial on a charge of conspiring the death of the King. Of this he was in fact not guilty, but the jury was packed and was not allowed to be challenged. Jeffreys was one of the Counsel for the prosecution, and the judges were servile instruments of the Crown. At that time prisoners accused of high treason were not allowed to be represented by Counsel ; hence Russell conducted his own defence, assisted by his wife, who sat near him throughout the trial taking notes of the proceedings. This lady was the daughter of the Earl of Southampton, who owned considerable property in what is now Bloomsbury, and after whom Southampton Row is named. Russell was, of course, found guilty and

sentenced to be beheaded. It was suggested by the Duke of York that the execution should take place outside Russell's own house, as Charles I. had been executed outside his palace in Whitehall; but the King overruled the proposal. Nevertheless, it was evidently intended to intimidate the followers of the Whig Lord by executing him as near as conveniently could be to the family estate, for though Tyburn, the usual place of execution, was usually reserved for hangings, Tower Hill was the recognised theatre for the more aristocratic spectacle of a beheading, and it is difficult to suggest any other motive for the change. Lincoln's Inn Fields were selected for the purpose, probably as being the only convenient open space in the neighbourhood of the Bedford estate. Russell himself remarked as on his journey from Newgate he turned to the left from Holborn down Little Queen Street, where the modern Kingsway lies, that he had often turned to the right with great comfort, alluding to his house in Bloomsbury, then called Southampton Square, where also dwelt his father-in-law, Lord Southampton. He was executed on July 21st, 1683. A brass tablet, under the shelter in the centre of the Fields, purports



LINDSEY HOUSE, No. 59 AND 60.

to mark the exact site of the scaffold ; but in view of the facts that this was well within the area of the Cup Field, which was cut up by railed walks ; that only the Purse Field remained unfenced, and that, though coming from Newgate, Russell entered the Fields from the western side, it is more probable that the actual scene of the execution was somewhere between the tablet and the house numbered 58 on the west side of the Fields. After the execution, Russell's body was carried into the Marquis of Winchester's house, now numbered 59 and 60, where the head was put on, after which the corpse was carried to Southampton House in Bloomsbury. Russell is usually hailed as a Whig martyr, and his trial and execution condemned as a judicial murder. Without disputing either statement, it may still be lamented that Russell was not quite the noble figure he is sometimes represented. When, a few years earlier, Titus Oates, Russell's fellow Whig, had by his infamous perjuries caused a proscription of all the leading Roman Catholics in the country, one of the last of his victims had been Lord Stafford, an old man nearly 70 years of age, of blameless life, whose execution on a charge of high treason

was so palpably unjust that it scandalised even the London mob at the height of the frenzy aroused by the Popish plot. The King was petitioned to mitigate the sentence, but Russell asserted that it would be an illegal exercise of the Royal prerogative to do so, and Charles II. was not at that time (1680) in a position to oppose the Whigs. Yet, within three years Russell was so far craven as to petition for mercy for himself; Charles' memory was not so short, and he refused to exercise on behalf of Lord Russell "a prerogative which in the case of Lord Stafford he thought fit to deny me." Russell is one of the many men whose unjust punishment on one charge serves to blot completely from public memory the lesser offences of which they were actually guilty.

A MONASTERY.

The next important event of which Lincoln's Inn Fields were the scene is concerned with the houses which stood on the site of Nos. 53 and 54. After the accession of James II., the Roman Catholic religion, formerly persecuted, was not merely permitted to be openly practised, but was encouraged by the new Monarch. In the year 1687, Father John

Cross, a friar of the Order of St. Francis, leased Nos. 53 and 54, and established a Monastery consisting of ten members. Less than a year later William of Orange had landed at Torbay, and James II. had fled to France. The anti-Catholic passion of the London mob again broke out, and on the night of December 11th, 1688, the monastery was attacked, crucifixes and other "Popish" emblems were carried out into the Fields and burnt, and the house and chapel gutted. Yet the proscribed religion continued for over a century to be practised on that spot, for as has been seen, first the Portuguese and later the Sardinian Embassies were established there, and under their protection a Roman Catholic chapel existed until a more tolerant age had dawned.

POWIS HOUSE.

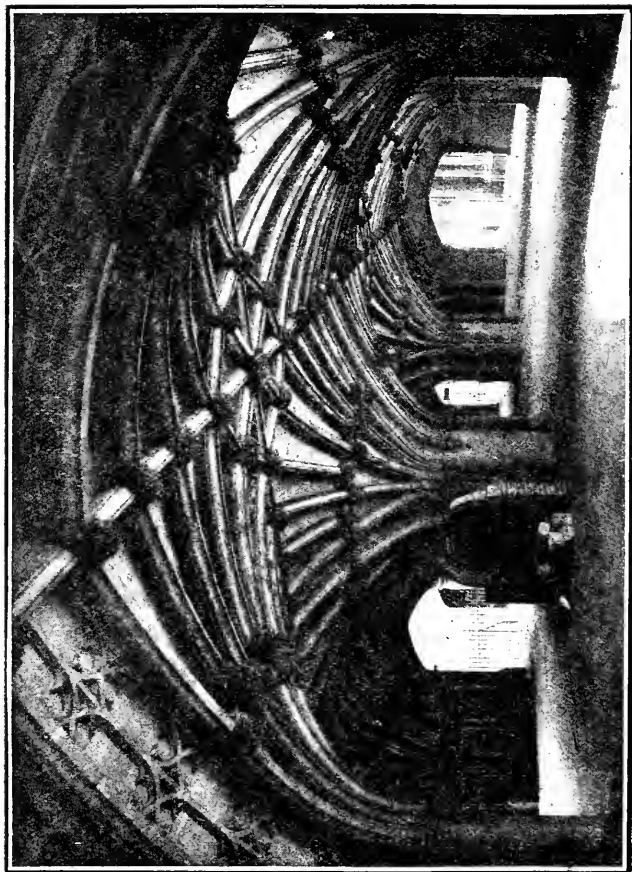
Early in the evening of December 12th, 1688, Powis House (Nos. 66 and 67), which still stands, was attacked by the mob, then hot on the track of suspected Catholics, but the timely arrival of a troop of militia saved the dwelling from sharing the fate of the friary. The rumour, however, began to spread that the departed King had brought

over troops from Ireland, who were even then marching on the city. The whole population, accordingly, spent the night in feverish preparations to withstand the impending massacre. Macaulay, who gives a stirring account of the events of this and the preceding night, calls the "Irish night" "the strangest and most terrible that England had ever seen." He applied somewhat similar words to the night following the sighting of the Spanish Armada, but perhaps poetic licence extends to cover ignorance of what the poet has already written in prose.

GORDON RIOTS, 1780.

The last time in which Lincoln's Inn Fields appear prominently in history was in 1780, when, during the Gordon riots, the Sardinian chapel was again attacked by rioters, and severely damaged. The Gordon riots were the worst of the many anti-Catholic risings which from time to time have broken out in London. Their chief cause was the Catholic Relief Act of 1778, which had relaxed some of the more stringent laws against the Roman Catholics. As usually happens under similar circumstances, the bigoted and the

ignorant among the population were seized with an unreasoning hatred, akin to panic, of Roman Catholics and all their works, and the cry of "No Popery" became a popular one. A mass meeting was held in London on June 2nd, 1780, and found a leader in Lord George Gordon, a son of the Duke of Gordon, a crazy young man 28 years old. Under his guidance a mob broke into the lobby of the House of Commons; the Members being unable to carry on its business, adjourned till June 6th. Leaving the House, the mob proceeded to destroy any Roman Catholic chapels it came across. The Sardinian Embassy in Lincoln's Inn Fields (Nos. 53 and 54) and the Bavarian Embassy were both attacked and burnt on the first day of the riots. On the three following days, June 3rd to 5th, the riots continued, and not only the chapels, but also the houses of Roman Catholics and their alleged sympathisers were destroyed. On June 6th, Newgate and Clerkenwell prisons were broken open and the prisoners turned loose to join in the work of pillage. The whole city was completely at the mercy of the mob; no magistrate dare read the Riot Act, and unless this formality were gone

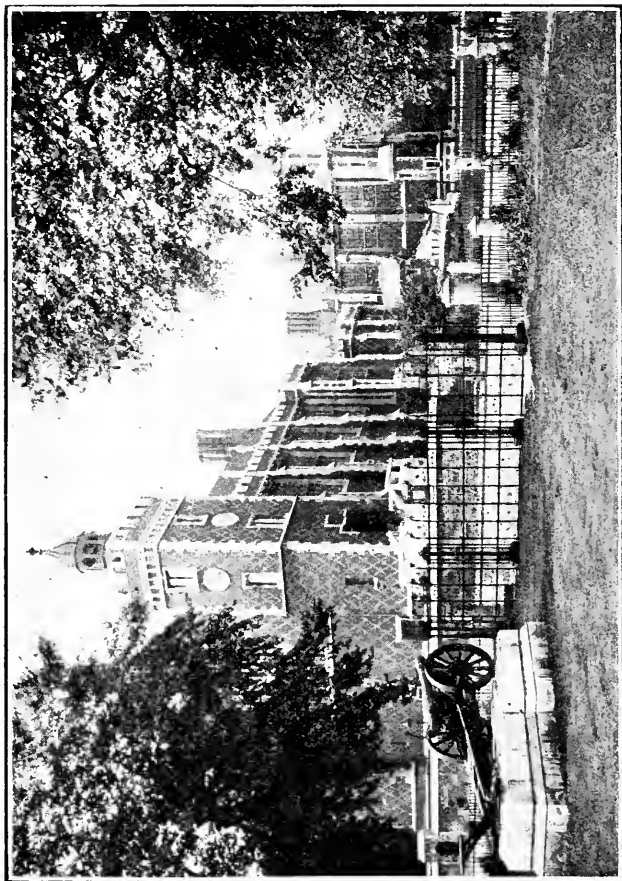


THE CHAPEL AMBULATORY, LINCOLN'S INN.

through the troops, who to the number of 10,000 were brought up to quell the disturbance, refused to fire. The situation was saved by that much-maligned monarch, George III., who on June 7th put himself at the head of the troops and personally ordered them to fire. Riot Act or no, such an order had to be obeyed, and the streets were cleared after over 200 rioters had been shot dead and some hundreds more wounded. One hundred and thirty-five were arrested, of whom 21 were executed. Lord George Gordon was tried for high treason, but acquitted. Seven years later he was convicted of libel, and died in Newgate in 1793, having in the meantime become a convert to Judaism. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that Dickens wove his novel of "Barnaby Rudge" around the story of the Gordon riots.

THE CURFEW.

From 1780 onwards the history of Lincoln's Inn Fields is uneventful, and though they long continued to bear the reputation of a dangerous place for a pedestrian to traverse after dark, they are now no worse in that respect than any other secluded spot in the neighbourhood. Curfew is tolled nightly at



LINCOLN'S INN HALL AND LIBRARY.

nine o'clock from the bell in the chapel of the Inn, brought from Cadiz by Lord Howard of Effingham and the Earl of Essex when they sacked the town in 1596. Not many residents, however, are now to be found in the Fields to listen to the tolling, though in times past many famous men have had their dwellings there, or been associated with one or other of its houses. Some account of them will be given in the next chapter; but it should be noted that of the houses connected with them, few are still standing in their original condition, that is to say, as they stood about the year 1660, when the girdle of houses was completed. Some were destroyed in the riots which have been described above; others are known to have been completely demolished at various periods, and new houses erected on their sites; and others, again, are known to have been rebuilt, though to what extent such rebuilding constituted a mere renewal of the existing fabric, as distinguished from a complete alteration of the structure, is uncertain. It seems probable that only Nos. 59 and 60, known as Lindsey House, have remained without substantial exterior alteration since 1660. Numbers 66 and 67 also date from the

seventeenth century, but they were only erected in 1684, the earlier houses on the site having been completely destroyed by fire in that year.

Most of the houses in the Fields have to be treated in pairs, since adjacent premises have, with few exceptions, been at one time separate dwellings and at another been united into one large mansion. Some pairs have alternated in this way many times, and the interior structure has accordingly considerably changed.

CHAPTER III.

FAMOUS RESIDENTS IN LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

LINCOLN'S INN being now, as formerly, the centre of legal London, it is only natural that on the list of famous residents in the Fields, lawyers and judges should predominate. It will be seen, however, that the Fields have never been a strict preserve of the legal fraternity, and that some of its most distinguished inhabitants have made their reputations in other spheres than that of the law.

In view of what has been said at the end of the foregoing chapter, it must not, of course, be assumed that a statement that a certain house was at a given date inhabited by a certain person refers to the house of that number now actually existing, but only to a house of the same number on the same site. Some of the houses in the Fields date only from the present century, but of the remainder most are 150 years old at least, and some considerably older. Of the houses which will hereafter be specifically mentioned, no great difficulty will be found, in judging

from their outside appearance alone, whether they existed at the date mentioned or not ; and to give details of each house would be outside the scope of this work.

SOANE MUSEUM.

At No. 13, on the north side of the Fields, is the Soane Museum. Sir John Soane (born 1753) was one of the most noted architects of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, his chief surviving work being the Bank of England. In 1792 he purchased No. 12, Lincoln's Inn Fields, which he rebuilt, and in which he lived until 1812, when he moved to No. 13, which he similarly rebuilt and left in its present condition. Many other houses in the Fields were also rebuilt under his guidance. Soane had a large collection of works of art, and in 1833 he procured a special Act of Parliament to ensure that this collection should not be broken up after his death, but be permanently preserved and placed at the disposal of the public. On his death in 1837, accordingly, his museum at No. 13 was opened.

No. 34.

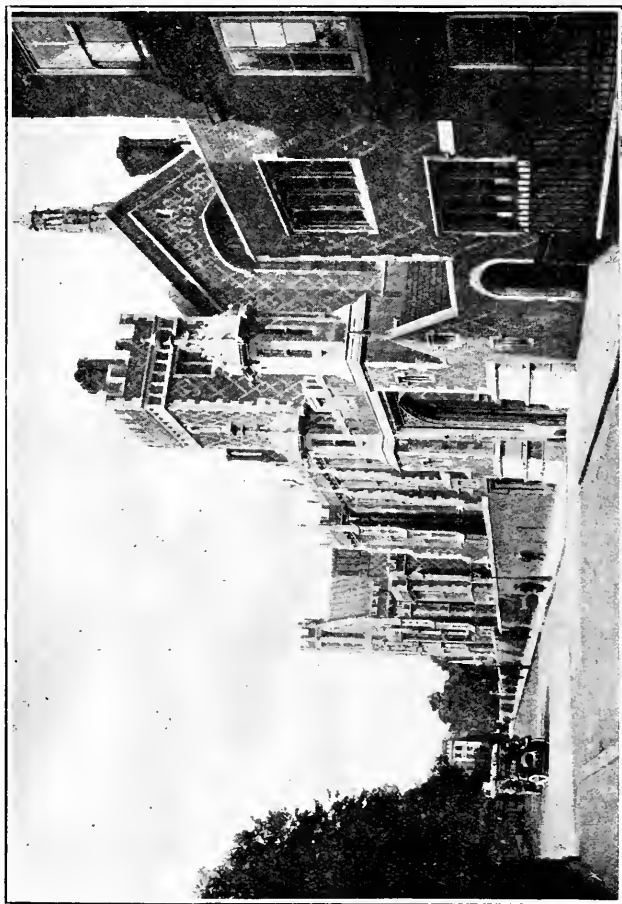
From 1758 to 1775 there lived in No. 34 Charles Pratt, first Earl of Camden, who had

previously occupied No. 56 for a short period. Created Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1761, Sir Charles Pratt, as he then was, gave the famous decision in the case of John Wilkes that general warrants (*i.e.*, warrants not specifying the name of the person against whom they were directed) were illegal; his decision, as being a blow to the Government of the day, made him exceedingly popular, but it has never since been questioned. From 1766 to 1770 Camden held the office of Lord Chancellor.

In the same house lived, from 1779 to 1798, Sir Francis Buller, who was called to the Bar in 1772, "took silk" in 1777, and in 1778 was created a puisne judge of the King's Bench. He was then only 32 years old, and is said to have been the youngest man ever created an English judge. The mythical decision that a man was permitted by law to beat his wife, provided he used no stick thicker than his own thumb, is attributed to him.

No. 35.

At No. 35 lived for a short time (1780-83) John Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton. Solicitor-General in 1768 and 1769, Dunning



EAST SIDE, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

was for the next 12 years in Opposition, as he resented the efforts of George III. to take an active part in politics through the party of "King's Friends" which he established in the Commons. Dunning was one of the principal supporters of the Catholic Relief Act of 1778, which, as has been seen, led up to the Gordon riots. In 1780 he moved and carried his famous resolution, "That the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished."

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

The Royal College of Surgeons occupies the premises formerly Nos. 39 to 43 on the south side of the Fields, being first established at No. 41 at the end of the eighteenth century. One of the former inhabitants of No. 41 was that Duke of Shrewsbury who was the chief promoter of the invasion of William of Orange, and who, after being prominent in the politics of the reigns of William III. and Anne, by his prompt measures on the death of the latter, secured the accession of the House of Hanover, in the very teeth of the Jacobite plotters, who had all their plans laid for a Stuart restoration the instant the Queen died.

No. 42.

At No. 42 lived from 1667 to 1689 Sir John Maynard, a lawyer who, having taken part in the impeachment of the Earl of Strafford in 1640, was still an active member of the Bar in 1688, when at the age of 86 he was presented to William of Orange, whose establishment on the throne he warmly supported. In the same house, in 1690, lived Sir Henry Pollexfen, who defended Baxter before Lord Jeffreys in 1685, but who in the same year was one of the Counsel for the Crown when Jeffreys held his "Bloody Assize" in the West Country after Monmouth's rebellion. While thus engaged, he gained especial notoriety for his prosecution of Lady Alice Lisle, who was sentenced by Jeffreys to be burnt alive for harbouring fugitives, and on whose behalf great efforts had to be made before the sentence was commuted for one of beheading. Pollexfen next appears, three years later, as one of the Counsel for the defence in the trial of the Seven Bishops who had petitioned against being compelled to read James II.'s Declaration of Indulgence in favour of Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissenters. Many of the Counsel, besides Pollexfen, engaged in this celebrated case

lived at some time or other in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Sir Robert Sawyer, the leader for the defence, who had recently been dismissed from the office of Attorney-General, dwelt at Nos. 61 and 62. Finch, his principal assistant, lived at Nos. 57 and 58 at a later period. John Somers, junior Counsel for the defence, and a future Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, lived, during his tenure of the latter office, at Nos. 66 and 67. He it was who made the closing speech for the defence, a speech lasting only five minutes, but which made his reputation and which probably mainly conduced to the acquittal of the bishops. Sir Thomas Powis, the Attorney-General, who led for the Crown, lived at Nos. 61 and 62 after the death of Sawyer, thus succeeding to the residence as he had to the office of his predecessor. Sir John Maynard, above referred to, had been asked to appear on behalf of the Crown, but had declined on the ground of conscience. It was the triumphant acquittal of the bishops which first heartened the nation to resist James' arbitrary government, so that William of Orange, who landed four months later, found his task of deposing his brother-in-law unexpectedly easy.

Lord Thurlow, Lord Chancellor from 1778 to 1792, with one interruption of a few months only, lived at No. 42 in the years 1776 and 1777.

NO. 51 AND 52.

On the west side of the Fields was for many years the official residence of the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. From 1693 to 1705 this official was installed at Powis House (Nos. 66 and 67), the Keepers during these years being Somers, above referred to, and Sir Nathan Wright. From 1705 to 1732 the Lord Keeper's residence was at Nos. 51 and 52, and here four Lord Chancellors, who were also Lord Keepers, dwelt, namely, Earl Cowper, Viscount Harcourt, the Earl of Macclesfield, and Lord King. Earl Cowper held office from 1705 to 1710, and having taken a prominent part in the negotiations for the union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland, in due course became the first Chancellor of Great Britain.

POWIS OR NEWCASTLE HOUSE.

Powis House was so called after the Earl of Powis, who rebuilt the premises in 1684, after an earlier house on the site had been destroyed by fire. This earlier house had

been for a few years inhabited by the Marquis of Halifax, the "Trimmer," the greatest statesman England produced between Oliver Cromwell and Sir Robert Walpole, and a writer of distinguished ability. Lord Powis was a supporter of James II., and was outlawed in 1689 after that monarch's dethronement. His house thus became Government property, and, as has been seen, was put to official use, after Sir Christopher Wren, the Surveyor-General, had inspected the premises and reported "what would fit it for a Lord Keeper for his public business and the convenience of his family." In 1705 the house was sold to the Duke of Newcastle (and then became Newcastle House), from whom it passed to his nephew and successor in title, who held office as Secretary of State for 30 years, and whose extensive estates, with the number of pocket boroughs they included, gave him an influence out of all proportion to his ability. It was under his nominal leadership that William Pitt the elder conducted the Government during the Seven Years' War, which established the power of England in both Canada and India. In honour of this Duke the house was renamed "Newcastle House,"

and the connection between it and its owner was only severed by the latter's death in 1768.

The Duke of Newcastle would make the most lavish promises at election time to voters. On such an occasion he told a voter, who wanted a supervisorship in the Excise for his son-in-law, which was expected soon to become vacant by the death of the present holder, that on that person's death he, the voter, might call on him at any time of day or night, and that his son-in-law should be appointed. The man in office soon after died, and the voter hurried up to London, where he arrived in the middle of the night, and, remembering the Duke's words, at once set off for the latter's residence. It so happened that that very night the Duke expected a messenger to apprise him of the death of the King of Spain, and who was without delay to be admitted to his presence. When the country voter arrived, the Duke's servants took him for the expected messenger, and he was, to his great delight, at once ushered into his Grace's presence. The Duke was in bed, the curtains of which were drawn. "Is he dead?" cried the Duke from behind them. "He is, your Grace; he died yesterday of a

complication of diseases and too much doctor's stuff, and I hope your Grace will say that my son-in-law is to succeed him."

"Your son-in-law succeed him! You must be mad!" cried the Duke, tearing open the curtains, when he recognised the speaker, and fell back in a tremendous fit of laughter. Whether the young man got the supervisorship is not on record.

NOS. 53 AND 54.

Of Nos. 53 and 54 some account has already been given in connection with the attacks on the Roman Catholic chapel when the house was occupied by the Franciscans, and in speaking of the Portuguese and Sardinian Ambassadors. The only other inhabitant of note was the fifth Earl of Bath, who occupied the premises from about 1640 to 1654. This earl was a prominent royalist in the Long Parliament, and was committed to the Tower by the Parliamentarians after the outbreak of the Civil War. He was later released, and made his peace with the Commonwealth.

NOS. 55 AND 56.

At Nos. 55 and 56 lived Lord Arundell of Wardour, a Roman Catholic peer who fought

on the royalist side in the Civil War, and after the Restoration was employed by Charles II. in diplomatic work. He was Charles' own personal agent at the French Court in 1670, when the Treaty of Dover was signed. This Treaty, so far as it was made known to the public, was an alliance between England and France to crush Holland; but there were secret clauses, secret even from some of the Cabinet Ministers, in which Charles bound himself to establish the Roman Catholic religion in England with the aid of French money and, if need be, of French arms. Arundell, as a Catholic, was one of the few advisers of Charles who could be trusted with full knowledge of the Treaty. At the time of the "Popish plot" terror, Arundell was one of the prominent men alleged by Titus Oates to have taken a leading part in the plot, and he was committed to the Tower, being only released five years later when James II. was on the throne.

BLACKSTONE.

A more distinguished inhabitant of the same house was Sir William Blackstone, author of the *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, who resided in the Fields from 1768 to 1779,

during which period his great work was published. Though not much considered at the present day, Blackstone's book had a great reputation at one time, in spite of its unscientific arrangement and loose terminology, and its author deserves to be remembered as the first lawyer who treated of English law as a whole in such a manner as to be intelligible to laymen ; or, as his great critic, Bentham, puts it, " he it is who, first of all institutional writers, has taught jurisprudence to speak the language of the scholar and the gentleman." Blackstone was the first Vinerian professor of English law in the University of Oxford, Bursar of All Souls, a Member of Parliament, and for the last nine years of his life a judge of the Common Pleas. He died in February, 1780, at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

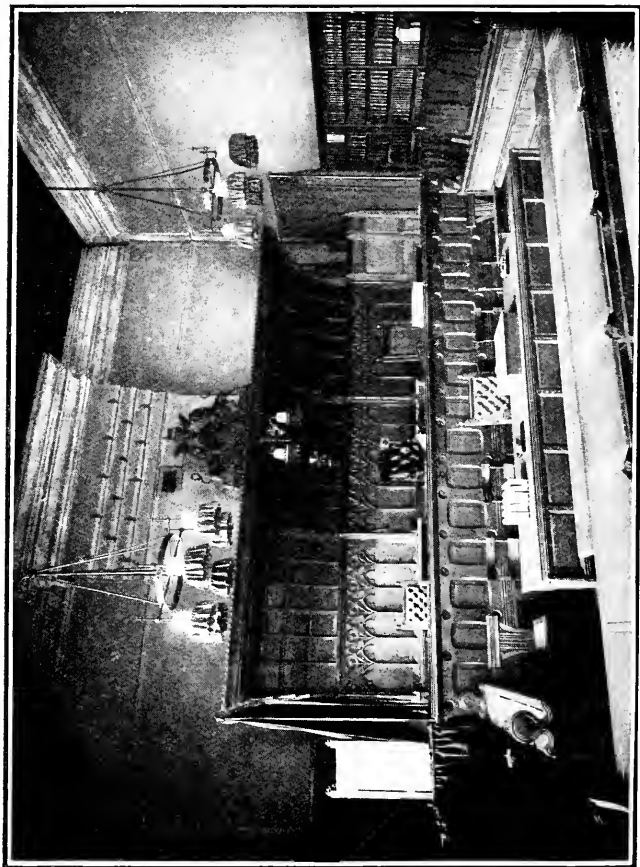
LORD MANSFIELD.

From 1740 to 1755 there had also lived at Nos. 55 and 56 Lord Mansfield, who from 1756 to 1788 was Lord Chief Justice, one of the greatest Common Law judges the country has ever known, and the founder of English commercial law. He three times refused



A KING'S BENCH COURT.

the Chancellorship, but, unfortunately, few judges have taken a more active part in politics than Mansfield. For three months he actually held the offices of Lord Chief Justice and Chancellor of the Exchequer concurrently. He had established his reputation as a Parliamentary debater in the House of Commons, when he had been Attorney-General; and, when in the Lords, he took a vigorous part in the debates on the American rebellion, arguing always on behalf of the Crown. During the Gordon riots of 1780 his house in Bloomsbury was sacked by the mob, his library and all his furniture was destroyed, and he and his wife were compelled to escape by the back door. In 1786 he returned to the Fields, taking the house (Nos. 57 and 58) next door to his former residence there. After his retirement from office he lived at Caen Wood (Kenwood), Hampstead. His successor at No. 56 was Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, already discussed, and it need only be further said that the two were great antagonists in the House or Lords, especially over the American question, though Mansfield, in his capacity as judge, upheld Camden's decision as to the illegality of general warrants.



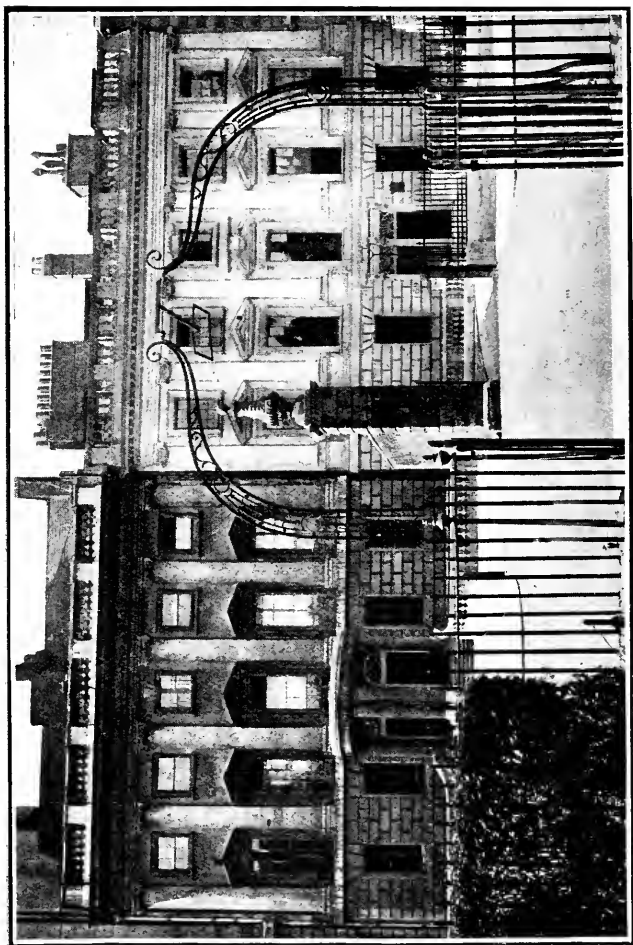
THE LAW COURTS.—APPEAL COURT

TENNYSON.

Tennyson, when a young man, occupied rooms on the fourth floor of No. 55, and was frequently visited there by Hallam, the friend whose untimely death inspired "In Memoriam." The house has recently been completely demolished, and replaced by a block of offices.

NELL GWYNN.

Among residents whose abodes have not been precisely identified must be mentioned persons so diverse in character as Milton and Nell Gwynn, both of whom occupied premises on the north side of the Fields, Milton about 1647 to 1648, and Nell Gwynn when she was at the height of her fame. Her son, Charles Beauclerk, Duke of St. Albans, was born during the period of her residence in the Fields.



57, 58, 59 AND 60, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

CHAPTER IV.

NOS. 57 TO 60, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

THE four houses—Nos. 57 to 60—have, like many others in Lincoln's Inn Fields, been at various periods two pairs of houses and four separate single dwellings. The original house on the site of Nos. 57 and 58 was erected about the year 1640 by Sir Edward Bellingham, a Sussex gentleman, who died shortly after completing his new town house.

EARL OF SANDWICH.

In 1664 the house came into the possession of Edward Montagu, first Earl of Sandwich. Having fought on the Parliamentary side in the Civil War, Montagu was in 1656 appointed Commander of the Fleet jointly with the famous Blake. After the latter's death Montagu was in sole command, and was enabled by his hold on the navy very materially to assist the restoration of Charles II. in 1660. For his services on this occasion he obtained his Earldom. He

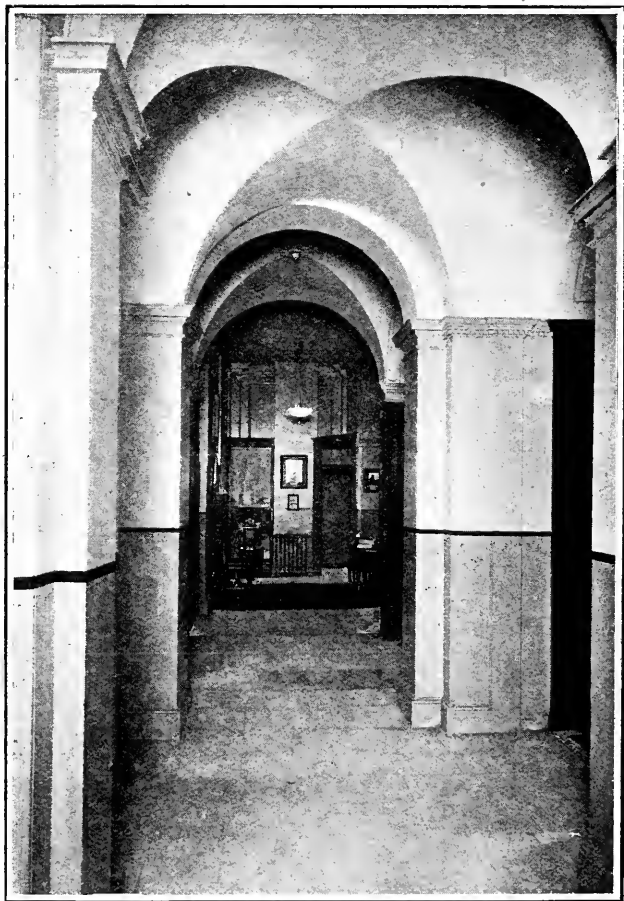
was then sent to Lisbon to bring to England Catherine of Braganza, the Portuguese princess, who married Charles II. and gave him as part of her dowry the Island of Bombay—the germ of the Indian Empire. Pepys, who among other offices at the Admiralty at one time held that of secretary to Sandwich, to whom he was related, considered excessive the annual rent of £250 which the Earl paid for Nos. 57 and 58. His diary records (January 20th, 1664), “Up, and by coach to my Lord Sandwich, to his new house, a fine house, but deadly dear, in Lincoln’s Inn Fields.” During the Dutch War of 1664 to 1667, Sandwich was actively engaged with the Fleet under the joint command of Prince Rupert and the Earl of Albemarle (Monk). At the battle of Harwich (June 3rd, 1665) he commanded a squadron, and the defeat of the Dutch was due to his enterprise. The Earl was then appointed to the chief command of the Fleet, and in August of the same year unsuccessfully attacked the Dutch at Bergen. A month later he captured nine enemy vessels. Through allowing some of the spoils to be at once divided among the Fleet, he offended a Court always in need of any money there was

available, and thus gave an opportunity to his enemies in Parliament, by whom he was unjustly accused of cowardice and incapacity. As a sort of banishment he was sent as Ambassador to Spain, in the place of Sir Richard Fanshawe, who had formerly lived on the south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and who, thinking that he was cast aside merely in order to provide a place for a disgraced naval commander, died brokenhearted before his successor had arrived. Sandwich, however, did good service at Madrid, and returned to England in time to take part in the second Dutch War. He again served in the Fleet, this time as second in command under the Duke of York; but at the battle of Southwold Bay, May 28th, 1672, his ship, the "Royal James," blew up, Sandwich and nearly all his crew perishing.

Sir GEO. CARTERET.

During his absence in Spain, Sandwich had let his house in the Fields to Sir George Carteret, a Royalist, who, after the Civil War, had betaken himself to the Channel Islands along with Prince Rupert. From these Islands they carried on a very successful campaign of piracy until rooted out by the

HISTORICAL NOTES ON



A CORRIDOR IN 57 AND 58.

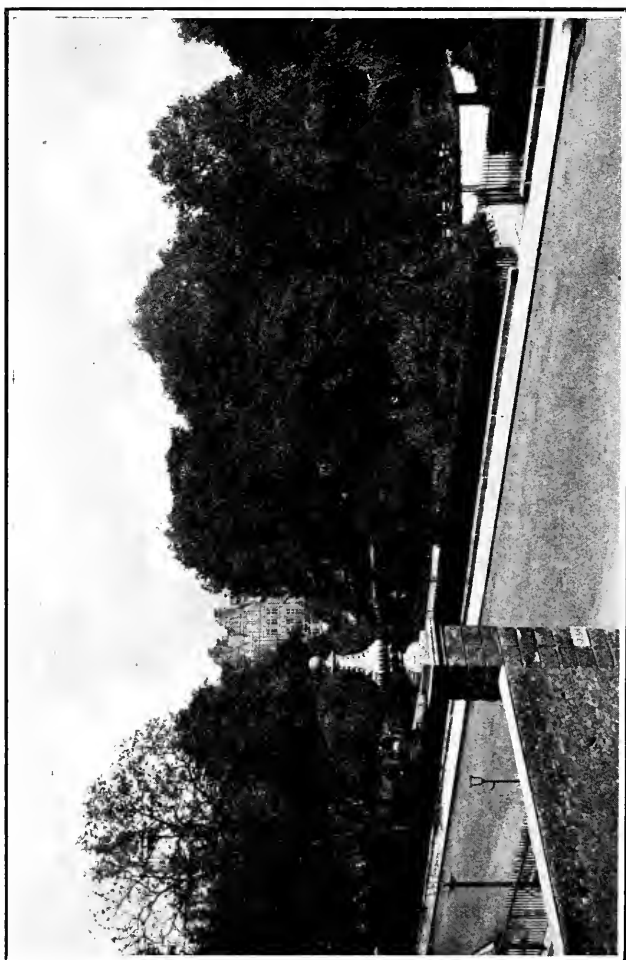
Commonwealth fleet. After the Restoration, Carteret held the post of Treasurer to the Navy, and later, that of Deputy Treasurer of Ireland. Pepys records, under date 25th September, 1667, "At noon I took coach, and to Sir G. Carteret's in Lincoln's Inn Fields, to the house that is my Lord's (*i.e.*, Lord Sandwich), which my Lord lets him have, and this is the first day of dining there."

THE KING AND QUEEN AT 57 AND 58.

Pepys visited this house on several occasions. On the 29th September, 1668, he records that a supper was given to the King and Queen "at my Lady Carteret's," and in the absence of information to the contrary, it may be assumed that it was Nos. 57 and 58 which were honoured by the Royal guests.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL.

The next noteworthy occupant of this building was the Hon. Heneage Finch, who became Solicitor-General in 1679, and as such took part in the prosecution of Lord William Russell, which has already been discussed at length. Resigning office in 1686, he was one of the leaders engaged for the



THE FIELDS, VIEWED FROM 57 AND 58.

defence of the Seven Bishops, which also has been referred to. His residence at Nos. 57 and 58 lasted for only a few years at the beginning of the eighteenth century, during which period he was raised to the peerage as Baron Guernsey, and later as Earl of Aylesford.

T. POVEY, M.P., BOSSINEY.

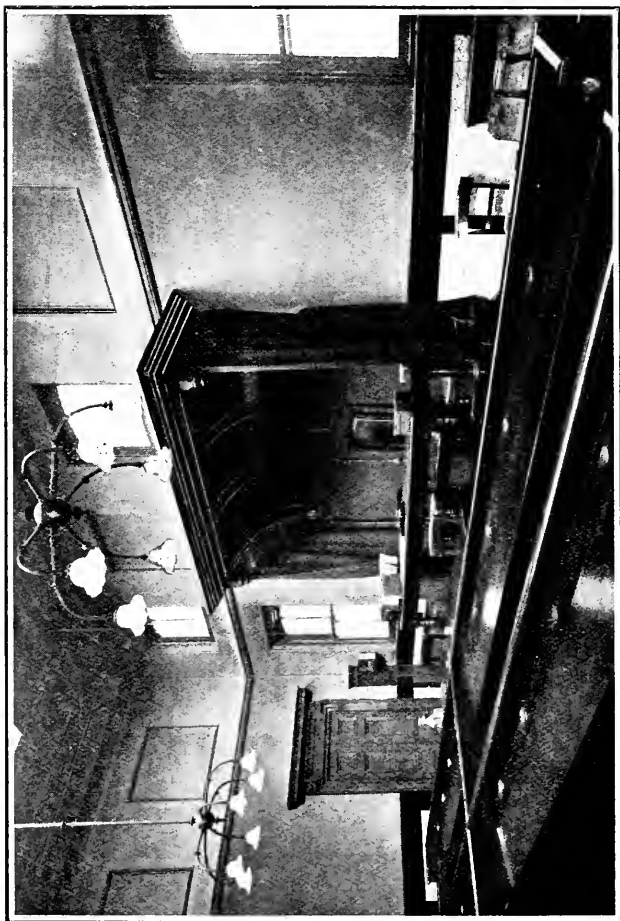
Thomas Povey, who was M.P. for the hamlet of Bossiney, near Tintagel, in 1658, resided for a time in No. 57.

LORD JAMES RUSSELL.

Finch was succeeded in the house in Lincoln's Inn Fields by Lord James Russell, the younger brother of the man who had been executed opposite the very windows of these premises. It would naturally be supposed that the melancholy event would have given a member of the house of Bedford a deep aversion for the place, but Lord James resided there for four or five years, until his death in 1712.

LORD CHANCELLOR.

In 1730 the house was purchased for £3,000 by Charles Talbot, who had been



THE PATENT OFFICE--COURT ROOM.

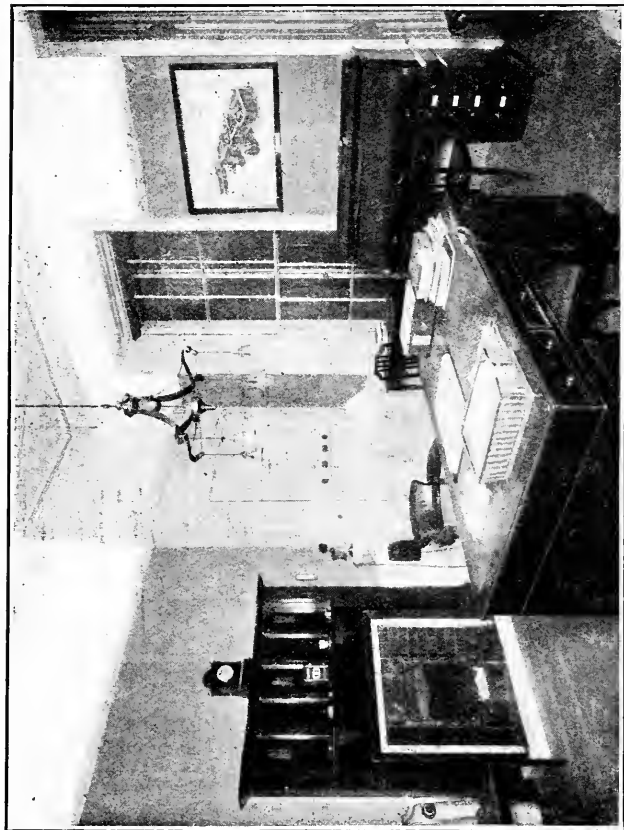
appointed Solicitor-General in 1726, and who in 1733 was raised to the woolsack. The new owner rebuilt the premises, and thereby subjected himself to some hostile criticism. One authority, writing in 1734, after describing Nos. 59 and 60, goes on to say: "Sorry I am that the house adjoining to this, so lately rebuilt on the same design, is not like it in all particulars; the alterations which have been made in it are very far from improving it, and what it has gained in height it has lost in proportion, and what is added of decoration is deviating from simplicity and beauty; the height of the roof is a blemish that the lowness of the wall and portal will hardly atone for. But, that the house suffers in itself by these ill-judged refinements is not all; it hurts the whole side of the square, which these two houses are properly the centre of, and, if they had been uniform and regular, would have justly appeared an ornament to the whole; for 'tis my opinion that, in all squares, there should be a capital building in the middle of each side, which should serve to fix the eye, and give the better air of magnificence to the prospect."



SIR JOHN SOANE'S PORCH AT 57 AND 58.

With regard to these remarks, it can only charitably be supposed that the critic had never seen the square before Nos. 57 and 58 were restored, for if he had he must have noticed that so long as Nos. 57 and 58 were low, and the tallest building on that side—the “capital building” as the critic would call it—was Lindsey House (Nos. 59 and 60), the row presented a very lopsided appearance. A comparison of old prints of the square, as it existed before 1730, with the present aspect of its western side, shows that the raising of the height of Nos. 57 and 58 considerably improved the balance of the row.

Built in stone, Nos. 57 and 58, as left in 1730, are described by Mr. W. E. Riley, architect to the London County Council, as “a scholarly example of classical architecture.” Six pilasters of the Ionic order, occupying the combined height of the first and second floors, are the principal feature of the facade. The original entrance was poor, but about the year 1795 the house was divided into two by Sir John Soane, and a new semi-circular entrance, with four Doric columns was erected. In 1909 the premises were again united, but no alteration was made to the exterior of the building.

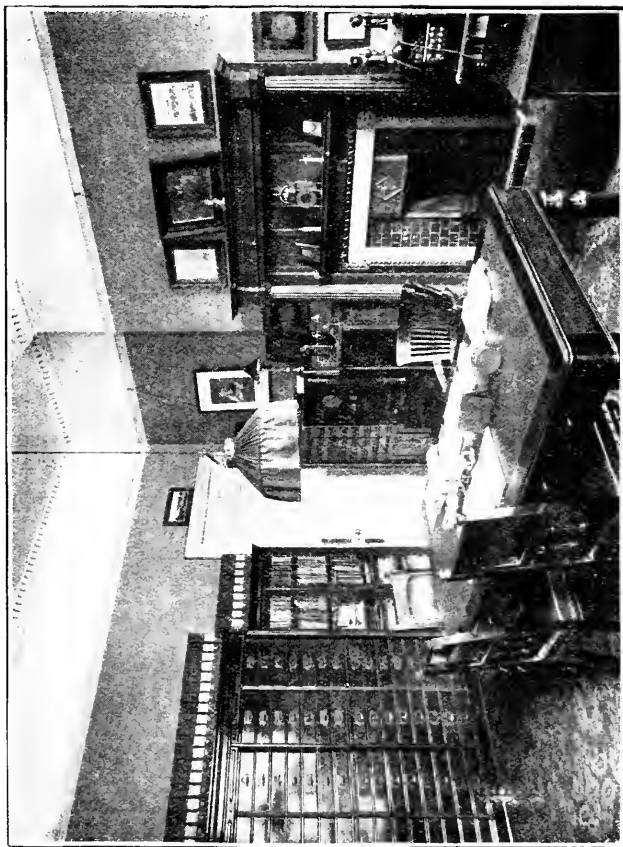


"BLEAK HOUSE," TULKINGHORN'S ROOM, 58, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

DICKENS—BLEAK HOUSE—THE CHIMES.

From 1834 until 1856 John Forster, the friend and biographer of Charles Dickens, had chambers in No. 58, and was often visited there by the author. On December 22nd, 1844, Dickens read *The Chimes* to a distinguished company assembled on the ground floor front room on the right of the entrance ; and it was in this building that he located the office of Mr. Tulkinghorn, the story of whose murder forms a dramatic chapter in *Bleak House*. The painted ceiling which is there described has never been found, though search has been made for it both by the present owners of the premises and by their predecessors.

The premises were acquired by Messrs. Marks and Clerk, on their removal from Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, in 1908, under whose direction extensive internal alterations and additions were made, including the reconversion of the building from two houses to a single one, due care being taken to preserve all features of architectural or historic interest in their former condition.



A DICKENS ROOM—"THE CHIMES," 58, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

LINDSEY HOUSE—59 AND 60.

Numbers 59 and 60 are sometimes referred to as "Lindsey House," and like the neighbouring premises, Nos. 57 and 58, were built about the year 1640. The name is usually accounted for by the statement that the house was built for the first Earl of Lindsey, who was killed in 1642 at the battle of Edgehill. There seems to be no foundation for this statement, however, and the name, as will be seen, was only applied to the house at a much later period. The building is ascribed by later authorities to Inigo Jones, and though contemporary confirmation of the statement is lacking, modern experts are agreed that the house shows many characteristics of his work ; in absence of any direct contradiction of the theory, therefore, Inigo Jones may be taken to be the architect. As has been said, this is the only House in the Square of which it can definitely be recorded that it presents the same elevation as it did when first erected. The front is adorned with six Ionic pilasters, not, however, so fine as those on the neighbouring building. The whole front has been stuccoed and painted at some period since its original erection. The premises were divided into two in the middle of the

eighteenth century, but no substantial alteration was effected in the facade beyond making a double entrance. The houses have recently been reconverted by Sir Geo. Croydon Marks, M.P., into a single dwelling. The forecourt is flanked by two high brick piers, surmounted by stone vases. It is supposed that there were originally six of these, with iron gates between. The missing piers were probably removed when the house was divided into two.

EARL OF WINCHESTER.

The story which connects the first Earl of Lindsey with Nos. 59 and 60 being rejected, the first dweller of note in the premises was Charles Rich, who took up his residence there in 1652. In 1659, on the death of his elder brother, Rich became Earl of Warwick, and ceased to reside in the Fields, though he did not sell his house there until 1664. The purchaser was Charles Powlett, who in 1675 succeeded to the Earldom of Winchester. His occupation of the house lasted for over 20 years. In 1683, when Lord William Russell was executed in the Fields, his body was carried "first into Lord Marquess Winchester's house, where his head was put on,

and from there in a hearse to Southampton House," in Southampton, now Bloomsbury, Square.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

From 1700 for a space of two or three years Nos. 59 and 60 were occupied by Charles Sackville, sixth Earl of Dorset and Earl of Middlesex, who had fought as a volunteer in the naval battle of Harwich in 1665, and had distinguished himself by his gallant conduct. On that occasion he is alleged to have composed the well-known song, "To all you ladies now on land." He afterwards became Lord Chamberlain of the Household to William III.

DUKE OF ANCASTER.

In 1704 the house was bought for £4,000 by Robert Bertie, fourth Earl of Lindsey, Lord Great Chamberlain to Queen Anne. In 1706 he was created Marquis, and in 1715 Duke of Ancaster. He died in 1723, and his house passed to his son and successor in title, and remained in the occupation of the family till about 1745. It would seem fairly certain that the name "Lindsey House" was derived from this connection.

DUKE OF SOMERSET.

In 1748 the houses came into the hands of Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset. This peer had married in 1682 Elizabeth Percy, heiress of the great Earls of Northumberland. From her red hair the Duchess was referred to as "Carrots from Northumberland" by Dean Swift. The Duke was first Lord of the Bedchamber to James II., and commanded a regiment, but lost both posts through his refusal to assist James' efforts on behalf of the Catholic religion. He took up arms on behalf of William of Orange on the landing of the latter, and both he and his wife were favourites of Queen Anne. He was known to his contemporaries as "the proud Duke." The story goes that his second wife once tapped him on the shoulder, whereupon, in great disgust, he remarked: "Madam, my first Duchess was a Percy, and *she* never took such a liberty." He died shortly after acquiring the premises in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

SPENCER PERCEVAL, PRIME MINISTER.

The only inhabitant of whom any record has been made during the period when the house was divided into two was Spencer

Perceval, M.P. Born in 1762, Perceval became a barrister, and in 1791 took up his residence at No. 59. In 1796 he "took silk" and entered Parliament. In 1801 he became Solicitor-General, and Attorney-General in the following year. From 1803 onwards he owned both Nos. 59 and 60, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Resigning office in 1806, he soon after returned to the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and on June 25th, 1807, gave a Ministerial dinner at his house in the Fields, when the King's Speech was read and approved before being delivered in Parliament. In 1809 he became Prime Minister, and thus held the reins of power at home during the most critical years of the Peninsular War. On May 11th, 1812, he was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons by a lunatic named Bellingham, who alleged some private grievance against the Government. The murder had no political effect, for Perceval was not a man of any outstanding ability; though it has been said that "nothing could have happened so opportunely for Perceval's reputation as his murder, which raised him to the position of a martyr. From having been really a Minister of moderate abilities, by his death he suddenly became,

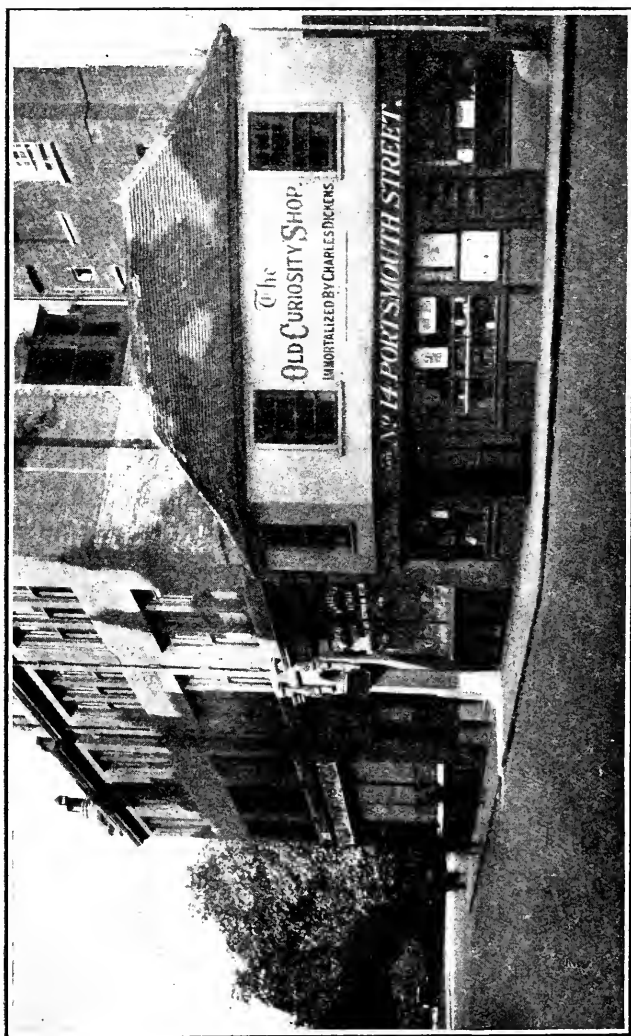


THE POLITICAL ROOM, LINDSEY HOUSE.

in public estimation, a political genius, a first-rate financier, and a powerful orator."

Lindsey House contains several interesting reminders of its past history, and many objects of artistic and architectural curiosity. In the ground floor room at the front of No. 59 is an ornamental alcove flanked with Ionic columns and bearing the arms of Henry Shiffner, a former inhabitant of the house, and of his wife. The chimney-piece in the same room is said to date from the occupation of Perceval, and is ornamented with a medallion bearing a head and an inscription, A. VITEL. GERM. IX. Nothing is known as to the Vitellius Germanicus IX. it portrays, nor as to why he should be commemorated in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Both houses (Nos. 59 and 60) were, in 1916, acquired by Sir George Croydon Marks, M.P., who carried out extensive internal alterations, while preserving any features of historic or artistic interest. A communication was made with the two adjoining houses (Nos. 57 and 58), owned, as previously stated, by Messrs. Marks and Clerk.



THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP BY LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

The whole neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn Fields is rich in memories of Dickens. There need only be mentioned here the Old Curiosity Shop, which still stands in Portsmouth Street, at the back of the southern row of houses in the Fields.

COMMISSIO SPECIALIS DIRECTA DOMINO CANCELLARIO
AND ALUS PRO SUPERVISIONE CAMPORUM VOCATORUM
LINCOLN'S INNE FEILDS.

James by the grace of God, King of England Scotland and France and Ireland Defender of the Faith, etc. to our right trustee and right welbeloved Councillor, Francis Lord Verulam Lord Chancellor of England, and to our right trustee and right welbeloved cousins and councillors, Edward Earle of Worcester Lord Keeper of our Privy Seale, William Earle of Pembroke Chamberlaine of our Household, Thomas Earle of Arundell, . . . Henry Earle of Southampton, Richard Earle of Dorsett, William Earle of Salisburne, etc., etc. . . . (including Inigo Jones) . . . Know yee that it is no small Contentment unto Us that, within theis sixteene yeares of our Raigne over our Kingdome of England, there have been more public works, near and about our Citie of London undertaken and finished then in Ages heretofore; Wherefore being given to understand that there are in the West part of the Suburbs of our Citie of London certaine Groundes, commonlie called and known by the Name of Lincolnes Inn Feilds, lyeing and scituate in a place much planted round about with the Dwellings and Lodgings of Noblemen and Gentlemen of Qualitie, as well of the Innes of Courte or others, which if they were reduced into faire and goodlie Walkes would be a matter of greate Ornament to the Citie, Pleasure and Freshness for the Health and Recreation of the Inhabitants thereabouts, and for the Sight and Delight

of Embassadors and Strangers coming to our Court and Cittie, and a memorable worke of our time to all Posteritie. We have taken it into our princely Care to order and directe, by Authoritie of our Royall C^ommission, how the same may be most speedely, substantially and gracefully accomplished and performed, as well by removing and repressing all nuesances and inconvenient Buildings which confine upⁿ the same, as by the ordering and contriveing of the Grounds themselves in such sorte as may be most for Comlines and Beautie ; and therefore Wee have assigned you to be our C^ommissioners and by theis Presents doe give unto you, or any fower or more of you (whereof Wee will you our said Lord Channcellor of England, Lord Privie Seale, Lord Chamberlaine, or Earle of Arundell to be one) full Power and Authority to survey the said Feilds, and by Oath or otherwise to enquire of all and every the Nusances and Annoyances therein, as well those that have happened sithence any of our Proclamations made against multiplicity of Building by erecting of Houses, pety Tenements and Cotages, contrary to the said Proclamations, and pestring of Houses there with multitude of Inmates and Lodgers, as alsoe to enquire accordinglie of all other Nusances, Inconveniencies and Annoyances whatsoever, whereby the Ayre in those Partes now is or in tyme may be corrupted or made unwholsome, and the same to demolishe, pull downe and reforme according to your Wisdomes and Discretions, and therein nevertheles to take such order that all and every the Owners of the said Closes, Feildes, Grounds, Tenements, Cottages, and other Erections there, and all and everie the Farmers and Possessors of them or any of them, may according to an indifferent valuation of the same

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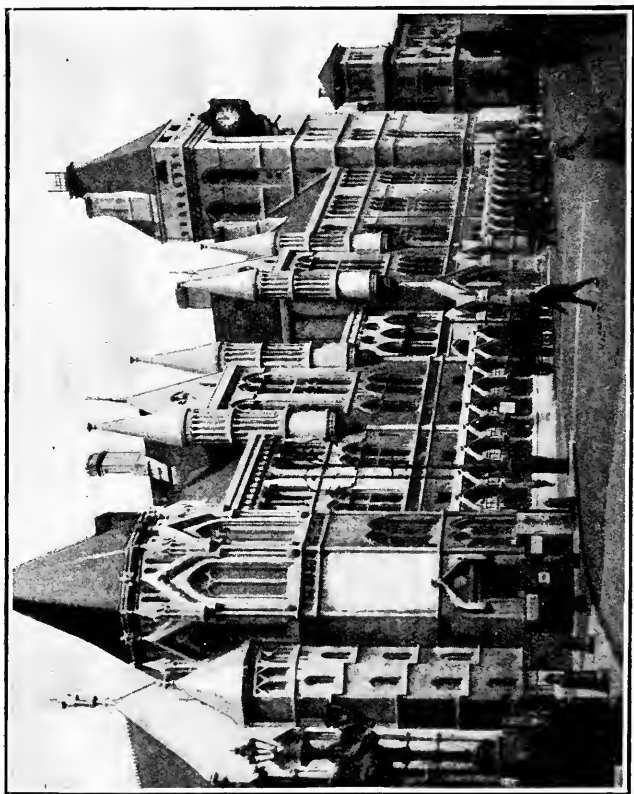
by Oath or otherwise to be enquired of, in reasonable sorte be compounded withal (due respectes being first had that the Contempte and Breache of our said Proclamations be not neglected) for all their and everie of their lawfull Estates, Titles, Termes of Yeares and Interests in the said Closes, Feildes, Grounds, Tenements, Cottages, Erections, or any of them, and that the said Closes and Groundes, commonlie called Lincolnes Inne Feildes, according to your Wisdomes and Discretions, may be framed and reduced both for Sweetness, Uniformitie and Comelines into such Walkes, Partitions or other Plottes, and in such sorte, manner and forme, both for publike Health and Pleasure, as by the said Inago Jones is or shall be accordingly drawne by way of Mapp or Ground Plott, exhibited plained and set out and approved by Us:

And for that soe good and publike a Worke cannot, according unto our Royall Meaning and Intention, be effected without great Charge and the helpe of many Handes whereby all Charges are lessened and made light, We will and require you, or any fouer or more of you (whereof We will you our said Lord Channccellor, Lord Privie Seale, Lord Chamberlaine, or Earle of Arrundell to be one) to certifie unto Us in Writing the Names of all and every the Persons inhabiting within the Parishes next adjacent unto the said Feilds; videlicet, Saint Martines in the Feilds, Saint Gyles in the Feildes, Saint Marie Savoy, Saint Clement, Saint Andrewe, Saint Dunston, and Saint Brides, that are able to contribute to the said Charge, with an Estimate what they and every of them are willing or may well afford to give to soe worthye a Worke, as alsoe the Names of such as are Refractorie and denie to contribute to the same.

And to the ende that the said Worke may presentlie be undertaken, and with all convenient speed finished, We will and our Pleasure is, that you, or any fower or more of you () doe nominate and appoint in every of the said Parishes one or more sufficient persons residing within the said Parishes, to be Collector or Collectors for the gathering and collecting of all and everie the Contribution Money that respectively shall be given towards the said Worke within the said Parishes or any of them (except in the twoe Innes commonly called Serjeant's Inn, the fowr Innes of Courte, and the eight Innes of Chauncerie) which money soe to be collected Wee will and require, that the same be paid over by the said Collectors unto the Treasurer or Treasurers of the said Work by you, . . . to be chosen out of the worthiest, best able and most discrete Inhabitanes of the said Parishes, which said Treasurer and Treasurers, soe to be chosen shall and may be from tyme to tyme charged and chargeable in an Accompt, or otherwise, by all or any of the Inhabitants of the Parishes aforesaid for the not imploying or misimploying of the Money by him or them so to be received.

And for and concerning the Receipts of the Contribution Money that shall be had or received from the said Serjeantes Innes, Houses of Court and Chauncerie, and of other Officers and Dependents of our Court of Chauncery, inhabiting within any of the said Parishes, our Will and Pleasure is that the same be collected and received by the Maister of the Rolls for the tyme being, and hee to bee Treasurer and annswerable for the same. And Wee commaund our Sheriffes of Middlesex, and all

HISTORICAL NOTES ON



THE LAW COURTS, STRAND VIEW.

other our Officers and Ministers, as well within Liberties as without that they and every one of them bee attendant upon for in and about the execution of this our Commission.

In witnes whereof, etc.

Witnes our selfe at Westminster the sixteenth day of November, Per ipsius Regens, 1618,

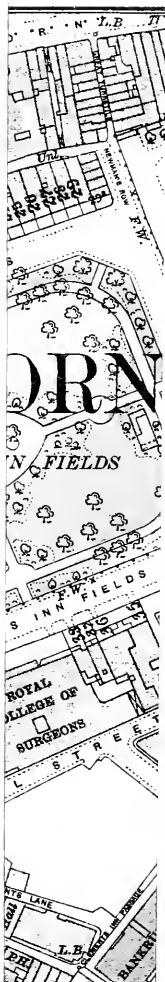
PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES CONSULTED.

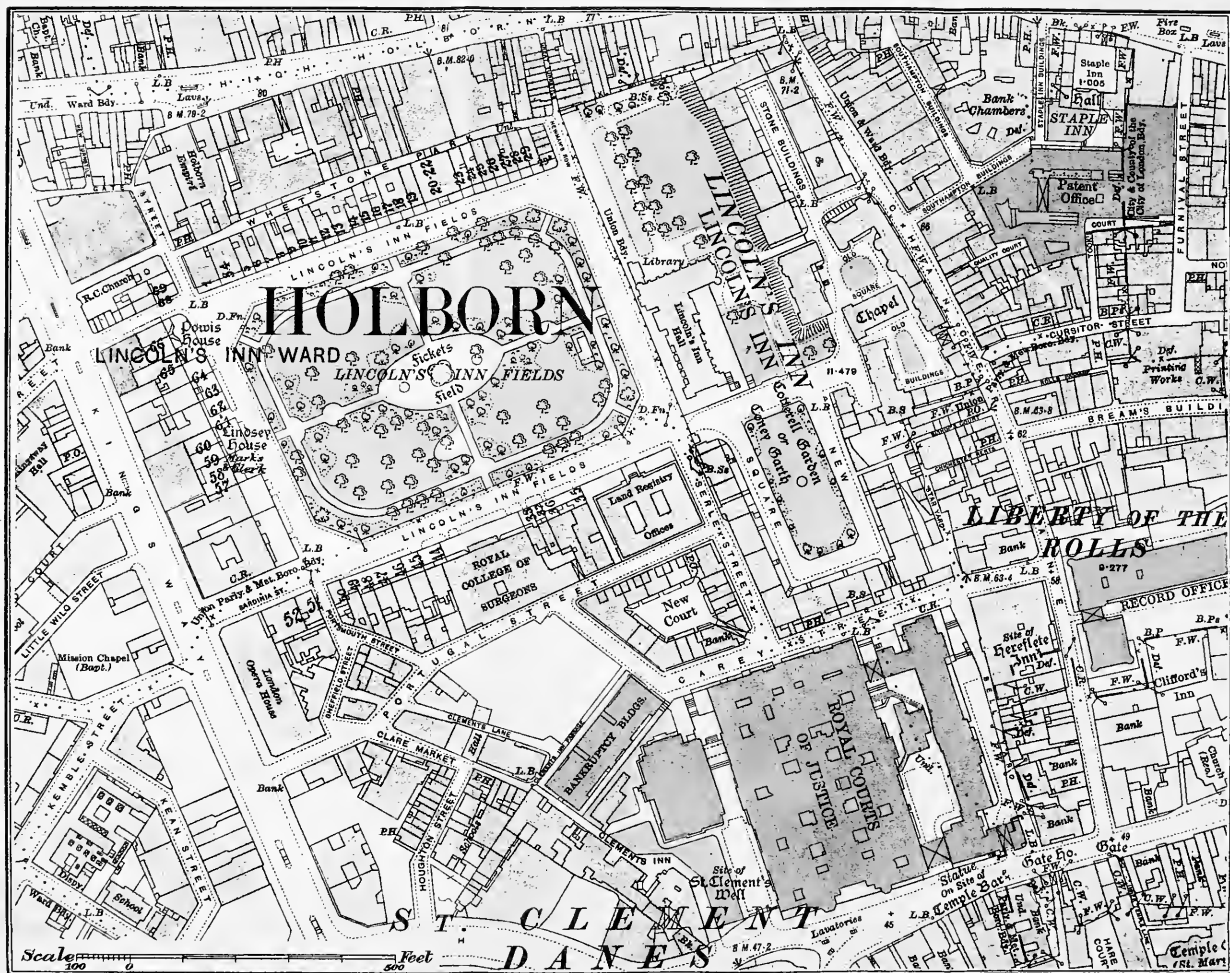
London County Council.—*Survey of London, Vol. III.*

Heckethorn.—*Lincoln's Inn Fields and the Localities Adjacent.*

Loftie.—*The Inns of Court and Chancery.*

Leigh Hunt.—*The Town.*







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